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THE

HISTORY

OF

CHARLES XII.

KING OF SWEDEN.

BIBLIOTECA BODLEIANA

BY M. DE. VOLTAIRE.

A LATE TRANSLATION

FROM THE

BEST PARIS EDITION.



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PREFACE.

INCREDULITY, ſays Ariſtotle, is the foundation of all wiſdom. This maxim is exceedingly good for whoever reads hiſtory, and ancient hiſtory in particular.

How many abſurd facts! what a heap of fables that ſhock common ſenſe! what then? Do not believe a word of them.

THERE were Kings in Rome, Conſuls, and Decemvirs; the Roman people deſtroyed Carthage; Cæſar conquered Pompey; all this is true: but when you are told that Caſtor and Pollux fought for this people; that a Veſtal with her girdle ſet afloat a ſtranded veſſel; that an abyſs cloſed as ſoon as Curtius had thrown himſelf into it, don't believe a word of it. You read every where of prodigies, of predictions accompliſhed, of miraculous cures operated in the temples of Eſculapius; do not believe a word of them. But a hundred witneſſes have ſigned the verbal proceſs of theſe miracles upon brazeen tables;

but

but the temples were filled with votive tablets which atteſted the cures. Believe there were fools and knaves who atteſted what they never ſaw; believe there were devotees who made preſents to the prieſts of Eſculapius as often as their children were cured of a cold; but for the miracles of Eſculapius, do not believe a word of them.

But the Egyptian prieſts were all ſorcerers, and Herodotus admires the profound ſcience they poſſeſſed in Demoniſm.—Do not believe a word of what the prieſts told Herodotus.

I shall always diſtruſt whatever is marvellous; but ought I to puſh my incredulity even to facts, which being in the common order of human events yet are deficient in moral probability?

For example, Plutarch aſſures us that Cæſar in complete armour threw himſelf into the ſea of Alexandria, holding in the air with one hand papers which he wiſhed to avoid wetting, and ſwimming with the other.

Do not believe a word of this tale which Plutarch tells you; rather believe Cæſar, who ſays not a word of it in his Commentaries; and be ſure that when one throws oneſelf into the ſea, and has papers in one's hand, that one wets them.

You will find in Quintus Curtius, that Alexander and his Generals were perfectly aſtoniſhed when they beheld

beheld the flux and reflux of the ocean, which they did not expect—don't believe a word of it.

It is exceedingly probable that Alexander, when he was drunk, ſhould have killed Clytus; that he ſhould have loved Hepheſtion as Socrates did Alcibiades; but it is not at all ſo that the ſcholar of Ariſtotle ſhould be ignorant of the flux and reflux of the ocean. There were philoſophers in his army; it was ſufficient to have been upon the Euphrates, at the mouth of which there are tides, to have been acquainted with this phenomenon. Alexander had travelled in Africa, the coaſts of which are waſhed by the ocean. Could his Admiral Nearchus be ſo ignorant as not to know what was known to every child upon the banks of the river Indus? Such nonſense repeated by ſo many writers throws too much diſcredit upon hiſtorians.

Father Maimbourg repeats to you, after a hundred others, that two Jews promiſed the Empire to Leo Iſauricus, upon condition that when he ſhould poſſeſs the Empire he would pull down the images. What intereſt, I pray you, had thoſe two Jews to hinder Chriſtians from having pictures; How could theſe two wretches promiſe the Empire; Is it not inſulting one's reader to preſent him with ſuch fables?

We muſt own that Mezeray, in his hard, low, and unequal ſtyle, mixes with the ill-digeſted facts he relates, many abſurdities as great as theſe. Now we have Henry the Vth King of England, crowned King

of

of France at Paris, dying of the piles for having ſat down, he ſays, upon the throne of our Kings; and now Saint Michael appearing to Joan of Arc.

I DO not even believe ocular witneſſes when they tell me things repugnant to common ſenſe: the Sieur de Joinville, or rather he that tranſlated his Gauliſh hiſtory in ancient French, aſſures me in vain that the Emirs of Egypt, after having aſſaſſinated their Sultan, offered the crown to St. Louis their priſoner. I ſhould be as well pleaſed to be told we had offered the crown of France to a Turk. What probability that the Mahometans ſhould have thought of making their Sovereign of a man whom they could not conſider in any other light than as a leader of barbarians whom they had taken in a battle, who could not be acquainted with their laws or their language, and was the capital enemy of their religion?

I CANNOT give greater credit to the Sieur de Joinville when he tells us this tale, that the Nile overflows at the feaſt of Saint Remy in the beginning of October. I ſhall diſpute with equal boldneſs the hiſtory of the Old Man of the Mountain, who, upon the news of the cruſade of Saint Louis, diſpatched two aſſaſſins to kill him, and who, upon hearing of his virtue, ſent off the next day two couriers to countermand them. This has too much the air of an Arabian tale.

THERE

THERE is nothing certainly more probable than crimes, but it is at leaſt neceſſary that they ſhould be proved. You find in Mezeray more than ſixty Princes "WHO HAVE SWALLOWED A MOUTHFUL;" but he ſays it without proof, and a popular report ſhould only be related as a report.

I WILL not believe even Livy, when he tells me that Pyrrhus's phyſician offered the Romans to poiſon his maſter for a bribe. The Romans had ſcarce begun to coin money, and Pyrrhus could have bought the Republic, if it would have ſet itſelf to ſale. The place of firſt phyſician to Pyrrhus was probably more lucrative than that of Conſul. I will not believe this ſtory till it has been proved to me that ſome firſt phyſician of one of our Kings has propoſed to a Swiſs Canton to pay him for poiſoning his patient.

LET us equally miſtruſt whatever appears exaggerated. An innumerable army of Perſians impeded by three hundred Spartans at the Paſs of Thermopylæ does not revolt me. The nature and diſpoſition of the country renders ſuch an event credible. Charles XII. with eight thouſand veterans defeats at Narva about fourſcore thouſand ill-armed Muſcovite peaſants. I admire and believe; but when I read that Simon de Montfort defeated a hundred thouſand men with nine hundred ſoldiers in three bodies, then I cry out, I don't believe a word of it. I am told it is a miracle; but is it perfectly true that God has worked this miracle for Simon de Montfort?

I SHOULD call in queſtion, no doubt, the combat of Charles XII. at Bender, if it were not atteſted to me by ſeveral ocular witneſſes, and if the character of Charles XII, did not render probable this heroical extravagance. This miſtruſt which we ought to entertain for particular facts, let us exerciſe alſo in regard to the manners of foreign nations. Let us refuſe our confidence to every hiſtorian, ancient and modern, who relates to us things contrary to the nature and turn of the human heart.

ALL the firſt accounts of America talked only of Man-eaters. It ſeemed, according to them, that the Americans eat men as commonly as we do ſheep. This fact, better aſcertained, dwindles into a ſmall number of priſoners who have been devoured by their conquerors in ſtead of the worms.

THE ancients, and their innumerable and credulous compilers, repeat to us inceſſantly, that at Babylon, the beſt policed city in the univerſe, all the women and girls proſtituted themſelves once a year in the Temple of Venus. I have no difficulty in believing that at Babylon, as well as elſewhere, pleaſure was to be purchaſed with money; but I can never perſuade myſelf, that in the beſt policed city which was then in the univerſe, every father and every huſband ſhould ſend his wife and his daughters to a market of public proſtitution, and that Legiſlators ſhould command this extraordinary commerce. Every day a thouſand equal abſurdities are publiſhed upon the manners of the

the Eaſt, and for one traveller like Chardin, how many have we like Paul Lucas!

A GREEK Monk, a Latin Monk write, that Mahomet the Second delivered the city of Conſtantinople over to pillage, that he broke with his own hand the images of Jeſus Chriſt, that he turned all the churches into moſques. To render this conqueror more hateful, they add, that he cut off the head of his miſtreſs to pleaſe his Janiſſaries, and that he cut open the bellies of fourteen of his Pages to find which of them had eaten a melon. A hundred hiſtorians copy theſe miſerable fables, the dictionaries of Europe repeat them. Conſult the real Annals of Turkey compiled by Prince Cantemir, you will ſee how ridiculous are all theſe lies. You will learn that the great Mahomet the Second, having taken one half of the city of Conſtantinople by aſſault, deigned to capitulate with the other, and preſerved the churches; that he created a Greek patriarch, to whom he granted greater honours than the Greek Emperors had ever given to the predeceſſors of that Biſhop. In ſhort, conſult common ſenſe, and you will judge how ridiculous it is to ſuppoſe that a great Monarch, learned, and even polite, as was Mahomet the Second, ſhould eviſcerate fourteen Pages for a melon; and if you are ever ſo little informed of the manners of the Turks, you will ſee how extravagant it is to imagine that the ſoldiers ſhould concern themſelves with what paſſes between the Sultan and his women, and that an Emperor ſhould cut off the head of his favourite to pleaſe them.

It is thus however that the greater part of hiſtory is written.

It is not ſo with the Hiſtory of Charles XII. I can affirm, that if ever any hiſtory has deſerved the belief of its reader, it is this one. I compoſed it originally (as is known) from the memoirs of Monſ. Fabricius, of M. M. de Fierville, and De Villelongue, and from the teſtimony of many ocular witneſſes. But as witneſſes do not ſee all, and ſometimes they ſee wrong, I fell into more than one miſtake, not only with regard to material facts, but alſo relating to ſome anecdotes, which in themſelves are indifferent, but which furniſh matter of triumph to contemptible critics.

I have even made uſe of the Hiſtory written by Norberg, Chaplain and Confeſſor to Charles XII. It is true that this is a work very ill digeſted and very ill written; in which one finds too many trifling facts foreign to the ſubject, and in which the great events appear trifling, ſo ill are they related. It is a tiſſue of reſcripts, declarations, and publications which are uſually made in the name of Kings when they are at war, but which never ſerve to diſcover the bottom of the affairs. They are uſeleſs to the politician and to the ſoldier, and tireſome to the reader. A writer may conſult them ometimes, only in a caſe of neceſſity, for information, juſt as an architect may employ the old rubbiſh in a building.

Among the public pieces with which Norberg has loaded

loaded his wretched Hiſtory. there are to be found many, which are ſuppoſititious and abſurd ; ſuch as the letter of Achmet, Emperor of the Turks, whom that hiſtorian calls Sultan Baſhaw by the grace of God.*

This ſame Norberg makes the King of Sweden ſay that which he neither ſaid nor could have ſaid relative to King Staniſlaus. He pretends that Charles XII. in anſwer to the objections of the Primate, told him, that Staniſlaus had made many friends during his journey to Italy. However, it is certain that Staniſlaus was never in Italy, as is confirmed by the teſtimony of that Monarch himſelf.

Norberg had neither underſtanding, wit, nor acquaintance with the affairs of the world, and this is probably what determined Charles XII. to chooſe him for his Confeſſor. I doubt whether he has made a good Chriſtian of this Prince, but aſſuredly he has not made him a hero. Charles XII. would be unknown if he was only known through Norberg.

It is proper to remark in this place, that there was publiſhed a few years ſince a ſmall pamphlet intituled " Hiſtorical and Critical Remarks upon the " Hiſtory of Charles XII. by M. de Voltaire." This little work is Count Poniatowſky's. It conſiſts of anſwers he had given to freſh queſtions on my part

See the Letter of M. Voltaire to M. Norberg.

during

during his late journey to Paris, but his Secretary having taken a double copy of it, it fell into a bookſeller's hands, who did not fail to print it, and the corrector of the Preſs in Holland entitled Mr. Poniatowſky's information "a Critique," to ſell it the better. This is one of the ſmalleſt frauds which are practiſed in that trade.

La Mottraye, a ſervant of Monſieur Fabricius, has alſo printed ſome remarks upon this Hiſtory. Amidſt the miſtakes and the frivolouſneſs with which this Critique of La Mottraye abounds, there is notwithſtanding, ſomething both uſeful and true, and I have taken care to profit by it in the latter editions, and eſpecially in this; for in regard to hiſtory, nothing is to be neglected, and we muſt conſult, if we have the opportunity, both Kings and valets-de-chambre,

A

DISCOURSE

ON THE

HISTORY

OF

CHARLES XII.

THERE are very few Sovereigns whoſe hiſtory ought to have been written apart. In vain have Flattery and Malignity exerted themſelves for almoſt every Prince. There is but a very ſmall number of them whoſe memory we preſerve, and this number would be ſtill ſmaller, if we remembered only ſuch as were virtuous.

THE Princes that have the beſt claim to immortality are thoſe, who have done ſome good to mankind; thus as long as France ſhall endure, it will remember the affection of Louis the Twelfth for his people. The great faults of Francis the Firſt will be forgiven for the ſake of the arts and ſciences, of which he was the father. Bleſt will be the memory of Henry the Fourth, who conquered his inheritance firſt by his valour and then by his clemency. The magnificence of Louis the Fourteenth will be applauded, who protected the arts which Francis had called into exiſtence.

FOR

For a contrary reaſon we preſerve the memory of bad Princes, as we record fires, plagues, and inundations

Conquerors are a ſpecies between good Kings and Tyrants, but partake moſt of the latter, and have a glaring reputation. We are eager to know the moſt minute circumſtances of their lives. Such is the miſerable weakneſs of mankind, that they look with admiration upon perſons glorious for miſchief, and are better pleaſed to be talking of the deſtroyer, than the founder of an Empire.

As for thoſe Princes who have made no figure either in peace or war; who have neither been remarkable for great virtues nor vices: their lives furniſh ſo little matter either for imitation or inſtruction, that they are not worthy of notice. Of ſo many Emperors of Rome, Greece, Germany, and Muſcovy; of ſo many Sultans, Caliphs, Popes, and Kings, how few are there whoſe names deſerve to be recorded any where but in chronological tables, where they are of no other uſe but to mark the *epochas!*

There is a Vulgar among Princes as well as among the reſt of mankind, yet ſuch is the itch of writing, that a prince is no ſooner dead than the world is immediately deluged with volumes under the name of memoirs, the hiſtory of his life, or the anecdotes of his court. By theſe means books have been ſo multiplied, that were a man to live an hundred years, and employ

employ them all in reading, he would not be able to run over all that has been publiſhed relating to the hiſtory of Europe for the two laſt centuries.

This deſire of tranſmitting ſuch uſeleſs ſtories to poſterity, and of fixing the attention of future ages upon the moſt common events, is owing to the weakneſs of thoſe who have long lived in ſome Court, and have had the misfortune to bear any part in public affairs. They think the Court they have lived in the fineſt, their king the greateſt, and the affairs they have been concerned in the moſt important that ever were; and they imagine poſterity will behold them in the ſame light.

If a Prince has had wars abroad, troubles or intrigues at home; if he buy the friendſhip of his neighbours, or ſell his own; if after ſome victories and ſome defeats he make peace with his enemies; his ſubjects, heated with the quick ſucceſſion of theſe events, think they were born in the moſt marvellous era ſince the creation. And what then? This Prince dies? new meaſures are taken; the intrigues of his Court, his Miſtreſſes, Miniſters, Generals, wars, nay, he himſelf is forgotten.

Ever ſince Chriſtian Princes have been endeavouring to outwit one another, making ſometimes peace, ſometimes war, they have ſigned thouſands of treaties, and fought as many battles, and the great and the infamous actions, which have been done, are innumerable

merable. Yet ſhould this heap of events and details be tranſmitted to poſterity, they would moſt of them confound and deſtroy each other; and the memory of thoſe only would ſurvive, which have occaſioned great revolutions, or which, having been related by good authors, are preſerved like pictures of obſcure perſons, only becauſe they were drawn by a maſterly hand.

A PARTICULAR Hiſtory of Charles the XII. of Sweden had not increaſed this public grievance, were it not that he and his rival Peter Alexiowitz, a much greater man than himſelf, have been, by the confeſſion of all the world, the moſt extraordinary perſonages that have appeared for more than twenty centuries. Yet was not the trifling ſatisfaction of relating extraordinary actions the ſole motive for writing this Life; it was ſuſpected that its peruſal might become advantageous to Princes, if this book ſhould by chance fall into their hands. Certainly there is no Sovereign who by the ſtudy of the Hiſtory of Charles XII. ought not to be cured of the madneſs of conquering; for where is the ſovereign who can ſay, I have greater courage, more virtues, more reſolution, more ſtrength of body, greater ſkill in war, or better troops than Charles XII. If with all theſe favourable circumſtances, and after ſo many victories, he were ſo unfortunate, what may other Princes expect, who ſhall have as much ambition, with leſs talent and fewer reſources?

THIS

THIS Hiſtory is compoſed from the relations of ſome perſons of diſtinction who have ſpent ſeveral years with Charles XII. and Peter the Great Emperor of Muſcovy; and having retired long after the death of thoſe Princes to a free country, have no intereſt in diſguiſing the truth.

MONSIEUR FABRICIUS, who lived ſeven years in intimacy with Charles XII. Monſ. de Fierville, Miniſter from France, Monſ. de Villelongue, Colonel in the Swediſh ſervice, Monſ. Poniatowsky himſelf, have furniſhed theſe Memoirs.

NOT one fact is advanced upon which eyewitneſſes of irreproachable veracity have not been conſulted; which makes this Hiſtory very different from thoſe *Gazettes* which have hitherto come out under the title of Lives of Charles XII.

MANY little ſkirmiſhes between the Muſcovite and Swediſh Officers are omitted; for it is the life of the King of Sweden, not of his Officers, that is here intended to be written; and of his life we have only ſelected the moſt important events. We are perſuaded, that the hiſtory of a Prince conſiſts not of all he has done, but of that which he has done worthy to be tranſmitted to poſterity.

IT is neceſſary to obſerve, that many things which were true at the time of writing this Hiſtory in 1728, were no longer ſo in 1739. For inſtance, trade began at that time to be leſs neglected in Sweden; the Poliſh infantry was better diſciplined, and had an uniform which it did not wear at the firſt period. In

reading Hiſtory we muſt always conſider the time of its writing. A perſon who ſhould read only the Memoirs of the Cardinal de Retz, would take the French nation for a ſet of enthuſiaſts, breathing nothing but faction, madneſs, and civil war. To read the Hiſtory of the fortunate years of Louis the Fourteenth, one would judge them a people born only for obedience, conqueſt, and the polite arts. Another who ſhould ſee the memoirs of the firſt years of Louis the Fifteenth, would remark nothing in our nation but its effeminacy, an extreme avidity for wealth, and too much indifference for every thing beſides.

THE preſent Spaniards are not the Spaniards of Charles the Fifth, and yet they may deſerve that character in a few years. The Engliſh of this age no more reſemble the Fanaticks in Cromwell's time, than the Monks and Monſignori who fill the ſtreets of Rome are like the ancient Scipio's. I doubt whether the Swediſh troops could ſuddenly become ſo formidable as thoſe of Charles XII. We ſay of a man, that he was brave at ſuch a time; and ſo we may ſay of a nation, they were ſo and ſo in ſuch a year, or under ſuch an adminiſtration.

IF any prince or Miniſter of ſtate ſhould meet with diſagreeable truths in this book, remember, that being public men, they owe an account of their actions to the Public; that this is the price with which they purchaſe their greatneſs; that Hiſtory is a witneſs and not a flatterer; and that the only way to force men to ſpeak well of us, is to act well.

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THE

HISTORY

OF

CHARLES XII.

KING OF SWEDEN.

BOOK I.

ARGUMENT.

An Abridgement of the Hiſtory of Sweden, to the Reign of Charles XII.—His Education.—His Enemies.—Character of Czar Peter Alexiowitz.—Curious Anecdotes relative to that Prince and the Ruſſian Nation.—Muſcovy, Poland, and Denmark unite againſt Charles.

SWEDEN and Finland form a kingdom one third part greater in extent than France, but very inferior to it in fertility, and at this time in population. This country extends nearly from the fifty-fifth to the ſeventieth degree of north latitude, being in length three, and in breadth two hundred French leagues, and lies under a ſevere climate, that hath hardly either ſpring or

autumn. Winter prevails there nine months of the year; the heat of summer immediately ſucceeding to the winter's exceſſive cold; it beginning to freeze in the month of October, without any of thoſe inſenſible gradations, which in other countries uſher in the ſeasons, and render the variation the more pleaſing. Nature, as a compenſation, however, has given to this ſevere climate a ſerene ſky, and a pure air. The almoſt continual heat of the ſummer's ſun, produces flowers and fruits in a ſhort time. The tedioufneſs of the long winter-nights is alleviated by the morning and evening twilights, which laſt in proportion as the ſun is more or leſs removed from Sweden. At the ſame time the brightneſs of the moon, which is not obſcured by clouds, but increaſed by the reflection of the ſnow lying upon the earth, and frequently by the northern lights, renders it as convenient to travel in Sweden by night as by day. The cattle are in this country, through want of paſturage, ſmaller than thoſe of the more ſouthern parts of Europe. The men are larger; the ſerenity of the ſky conduces to their health; as the rigour of the climate does to their ſtrength; they live even to a greater age than other men, when not debilitated by the immoderate uſe of wine and ſtrong liquors, which the Northern nations ſeem to be the more immoderately fond of in proportion as they are denied to them by Nature.

THE Swedes are well made, robuſt, active, and capable of ſuſtaining the greateſt fatigue, hunger, and penury.

penury. Born to a military life, full of pride, more brave than induſtrious, they have long neglected, and even to this day but badly cultivate, the arts of commerce, which only can ſupply them with what is wanting to their country. It is ſaid to be principally from Sweden, of which one part is ſtill named Gothland, that thoſe multitudes of Goths iſſued forth, who, like an inundation, overwhelmed Europe, and rent it from the Roman empire, which had for five hundred years been its uſurper, its legiſlator, and its tyrant.

The Northern countries were at that time much more populous than at preſent; not only from their religion affording the inhabitants an opportunity of furniſhing the ſtate with a greater number of ſubjects, by the poſſeſſion of a plurality of wives; but becauſe the women themſelves knew no reproach like that of ſterility and idleneſs; and being as laborious and robuſt as the men, they attained earlier, and remained longer in the time of fecundity.

Sweden preſerved its liberty till the middle of the fourteenth century; for though during ſo long a period there happened more than one revolution in government, ſuch revolutions turned out conſtantly in favor of freedom. To its chief magiſtrate was given the name of King, a title that in different countries has very different degrees of power annexed to it. In France and Spain it ſignifies an abſolute monarch; in Poland, Sweden, and England, the head of the common-

commonwealth. The king of Sweden could do nothing without the ſenate; and the ſenate depended upon the States-General, which were often convened. The repreſentatives of the nation in theſe numerous aſſemblies, were gentlemen, biſhops, and deputies of the towns; and, in proceſs of time, the peaſantry, a claſs of people unjuſtly ſlighted in other nations, and enſlaved in almoſt all the countries of the North.

About the year 1492, this nation, though jealous of its liberty, and boaſting even to this day of having conquered Rome thirteen centuries ago, was reduced to ſlavery by a woman, and a people leſs powerful than themſelves.

Margaret Waldemar, the Semiramis of the North, Queen of Denmark and Norway, joining addreſs to force, conquered Sweden, and formed theſe three great ſtates into one kingdom. After her deceaſe, the country was diſtracted by civil wars; throwing off and ſubmitting again to the Daniſh yoke, under the alternate adminiſtration of kings and popular protectors. Two of theſe tyrants oppreſſed them terribly about the year 1520; the one, Chriſtian II. King of Denmark, a monſter in vice, without one compenſating virtue; the other an archbiſhop of Upſal, primate of the kingdom, equally barbarous with King Chriſtian. Theſe two, in concert, cauſed the conſuls and magiſtrates of Stockholm, together with ninety-four ſenators, to be ſeized in one day and maſſacred by the com-

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mon executioners, under the pretext that they were excommunicated by the Pope for having defended the rights of the State against the Archbiſhop. After this they gave up Stockholm to be pillaged, and the whole town was put to the ſword, without diſtinction of age or ſex.

WHILE theſe men, agreeing as to the means of oppreſſion, and differing only in dividing the ſpoil, were committing acts of the greateſt cruelty, and exerciſing the moſt tyrannical deſpotiſm, a ſingular and novel event gave a turn to the affairs of the North.

GUSTAVUS VASA, a youth deſcended from the ancient Kings of Sweden, iſſued forth from amidſt the foreſts of Dalecarlia, where he had lain concealed, in order to deliver his country from ſlavery. He had one of thoſe great ſouls which nature ſo ſeldom forms, poſſeſſed of all the qualities neceſſary to govern mankind. The advantage of a fine perſon, and a noble mien, prepoſſeſſed every one in his favor, ſo that he gained partizans wherever he appeared. His eloquence, to which his engaging deportment gave peculiar force was the more perſuaſive as it was artleſs and ſimple. His enterprizing genius formed thoſe projects which to the vulgar appear raſh, but are imputed to a noble daring by great minds, and theſe his courage and perſeverance enabled him to accompliſh. Intrepid yet prudent, of a gentle diſpoſition in a ferocious age, he was in ſhort, as virtuous as it is ſuppoſed the head of a party can poſſibly be.

GUSTAVUS

GUSTAVUS had been the hoſtage of Chriſtian, and had been detained a priſoner contrary to the law of nations. Having eſcaped from priſon, he had diſguiſed himſelf in the habit of a peaſant, and wandered about in the mountains and woods of Dalecarlia; where he was reduced to the neceſſity of working in the coppermines, for ſubſiſtence and concealment. Buried as he was in theſe ſubterraneous caverns, he had the courage to form the deſign of dethroning the tyrant. To this end he diſcovered himſelf to the peaſants, who looked upon him as one of the ſuperior order of beings to which common men owe a natural ſubmiſſion. Theſe ſervile ſavages he ſoon converted into ſoldiers. He attacked Chriſtian and the Archbiſhop, repeatedly defeated them, baniſhed them from Sweden, and, at laſt, was deſervedly choſen by the States King of that country of which he had been a deliverer.

HE was ſcarcely eſtabliſhed on the throne, when he undertook an enterprize ſtill more difficult than conqueſt. The real tyrants of the State were the Biſhops, who having engroſſed almoſt all the wealth of the kingdom, made uſe of it to oppreſs the ſubjects, and make war upon the King. Their power was the more formidable, as popular ignorance held it to be ſacred. On the Catholic religion, therefore, Guſtavus revenged the criminality of its miniſters; ſo that in leſs than two years Lutheraniſm was introduced into Sweden; and that rather by the arts of policy, than by the influence of authority. Having thus conquered the kingdom,

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as he uſed to expreſs it, from the Danes and the clergy, he reigned a ſucceſsful and abſolute monarch to the age of ſeventy, when he died full of glory, leaving his family and religion in peaceable poſſeſſion of the throne.

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS was one of his deſcendants, commonly called the Great Guſtavus. This Prince made a conqueſt of Ingria, Livonia, Bremen, Verdun, Wiſmar, and Pomerania, beſides above a hundred places in Germany, which, after his death, were yielded up by the Swedes. He ſhook the throne of Ferdinand the Second, and protected the Lutherans in Germany, in which he was ſecretly aſſiſted by the See of Rome, who dreaded the power of the Emperor much more than that of hereſy. It was this Guſtavus who, by his victories, contributed in fact to humble the Houſe of Auſtria; although the glory of the enterprize is uſually aſcribed entirely to Cardinal de Richelieu who well knew how to procure himſelf the reputation of thoſe great actions which Guſtavus was content with performing. He was on the point of extending the war beyond the Danube, and perhaps of dethroning the Emperor, when he was killed, in the thirty-ſeventh year of his age, at the battle of Lutzen, which he gained over Walſtein, carrying with him to his grave the name of Great, lamented by the people of the North, and reſpected by his enemies.

HIS daughter Chriſtina, a woman of uncommon genius, was much fonder of converſing with men of letters

ters, than of reigning over a people whoſe knowledge was confined to the art of war. She rendered herſelf as famous for reſigning a throne, as her anceſtors had been for obtaining or eſtabliſhing it. The proteſtants have aſperſed her character, as if it were impoſſible for a perſon to be poſſeſſed of great virtues without adhering to Luther; while the papiſts have triumphed too much on the pretended converſion of a woman, who was no more than a philoſopher. She retired to Rome, where ſhe paſſed the remainder of her days in the midſt of the arts ſhe was fond of, and for which ſhe had renounced a kingdom at twenty-ſeven years of age.

BEFORE her abdication, ſhe prevailed on the states of Sweden to elect her couſin, Charles Guſtavus X. ſon to the Count Palatine, and Duke of Deux-Ponts, to ſucceed to the crown. This Prince added new conqueſts to thoſe of Guſtavus Adolphus; carrying immediately his arms into Poland, where he gained the famous battle of Warſaw, which laſted three days. He waged a long and ſucceſsful war with the Danes; beſieged their capital; re-united Schonen to Sweden; and confirmed, at leaſt for a time, the Duke of Holſtein in the poſſeſſion of Sleſwick. Experiencing afterwards a reverſe of fortune, he concluded a peace with his enemies, and turned his ambition againſt his ſubjects. Thus he formed the deſign of eſtabliſhing a deſpotic government in Sweden, but died, like Guſtavus the Great, in the thirty-ſeventh year of his age, before he had been able

able to complete that ſyſtem of deſpotiſm which was brought to perfection by his ſon, Charles XI.

CHARLES XI. a warrior like his anceſtors, was more deſpotic than any of them. He aboliſhed the authority of the ſenate, which was declared the ſenate of the king and not of the kingdom. He was frugal, vigilant, indefatigable; which would have made him beloved by his ſubjects, had not his deſpotic ſpirit converted their love into fear.

IN 1680 he married Ulrica Eleonora, daughter to Frederick III. King of Denmark, a princeſs of great virtues, and worthy of greater confidence than her husband repoſed in her. Of this marriage, on the 27th of June 1682, was born King Charles XII. the moſt extraordinary man, perhaps, that ever appeared in the world. In him were united all the great qualities of his anceſtors; nor had he any other fault or misfortune but that he carried all theſe virtues to exceſs. It is this Prince of whom we propoſe to write whatever we have learnt with certainty relating either to his perſon or his actions.

THE firſt book he was ſet to read was the work of Samuel Puffendorff, in order to give him an early knowledge of his own and the neighbouring States. The firſt foreign language taught him was the German; which he continued ever after to ſpeak with the ſame fluency as his mother-tongue. At ſeven years

years of age he was a proficient in horſemanſhip; when the violent exerciſes in which he delighted, and which diſcovered his martial turn, ſoon gave him a vigorous conſtitution, capable to ſupport the fatigues to which his natural inclination prompted him.

THOUGH gentle in his infancy, he betrayed an inflexible obſtinacy. The only way to bend him, was to awaken his ſenſe of honour; with the name of Glory, every thing could be obtained from him. He had an averſion to Latin; but as ſoon as he heard that the Kings of Poland and Denmark underſtood it, he learned it preſently, and retained ſo much of it as to be able to ſpeak it all the reſt of his life. The ſame means were employed to engage him to learn the French; but he perſiſted, as long as he lived, in the diſuſe of that tongue, which he would not ſpeak even to the French Ambaſſadors themſelves, though they underſtood no other.

As ſoon as he had acquired a little knowledge of the Latin, his teacher made him tranſlate Quintus Curtius; a book to which he was attached ſtill more on account of the ſubject than the ſtyle. The preceptor who explained this author to him aſked him, one day, what he thought of Alexander; "I think," ſaid the Prince, "I could wiſh to reſemble him." "But," reſumed the preceptor, "he lived only two-and-thirty years." "And is not that long enough (replied he) for one who has conquered kingdoms?" The courtiers did not fail to

to report theſe anſwers to the King his father, who exclaimed, "This boy will ſurpaſs his father, and even "Guſtavus the Great." Amuſing himſelf one day in the royal apartments in viewing two plans, the one of a town in Hungary, which the Turks had taken from the Emperor; the other of Riga, the capital of Livonia, a province conquered by the Swedes, about a century before; under the plan of the town in Hungary were written theſe words, taken from the book of Job: "The Lord hath given it me, and the Lord hath "taken it from me; bleſſed be the name of the Lord." The young Prince having read this inſcription, immediately took a pencil, and wrote under the plan of Riga, "The Lord hath given it to me, and the devil "ſhall not take it from me." Thus, in the moſt indifferent actions of his childhood, his unconquerable ſpirit would frequently diſcover the characteriſtic traces of an uncommon genius, which plainly indicated what he would one day prove.

He was eleven years of age when he loſt his mother; who died on the 5th of Auguſt, 1693, of a diſeaſe, as was ſuppoſed, owing to the bad uſage ſhe had received from her huſband, and to her endeavours to conceal her chagrin. Charles XI. had, by means of a certain court of juſtice called the Chamber of Liquidations, erected by his ſole authority, deprived a great number of his ſubjects of their wealth. Crouds of citizens ruined by this Chamber, nobility, merchants, farmers, widows, and orphans, filled the ſtreets of Stockholm, and

and daily repaired to the gate of the palace, to vent their unavailing complaints. The Queen relieved theſe unhappy people as much as lay in her power; ſhe gave them her money, her jewels, her furniture, and even her clothes: and when ſhe had no more to give them, ſhe threw herſelf in tears at her huſband's feet, beſeeching him to have pity on his ſubjects. The King gravely anſwered her, "Madam, we took you to "bring us children, not to give us advice;" and from that time he is ſaid to have treated her with a ſeverity which ſhortened her days.

He died four years after her, on the fifteenth of April 1697, in the forty-ſecond year of his age, and the thirty-ſeventh of his reign, at a time when the Empire, Spain, and Holland, on one ſide and France on the other, had referred the deciſion of their quarrels to his arbitration, and when he had already begun the work of pacification between theſe powers.

He left his ſon, who was then fifteen years of age, a throne well eſtabliſhed at home, and reſpected abroad; ſubjects poor indeed, but warlike and loyal; with finances in good order, and under the management of able miniſters.

Charles xii. at his acceſſion to the throne, found himſelf not only the abſolute and undiſturbed maſter of Sweden and Finland, but alſo of Livonia, Carelia, Ingria, Wiſmar, Wibourg, the iſlands of Rugen and Oeſel,

Oeſel, and the fineſt part of Pomerania, together with the duchy of Bremen and Verdun, all of them the conqueſts of his anceſtors, ſecured to the crown by long poſſeſſion, and by the ſolemn treaties of Munſter and Oliva, and ſupported by the terror of the Swediſh arms. The peace of Ryſwick, begun under the auſpices of his father, being concluded under thoſe of the ſon, he found himſelf the mediator of Europe, at the commencement of his reign.

THE laws of Sweden fix the majority of their Kings at the age of fifteen; but Charles XI. who was entirely abſolute, deferred by his laſt will the majority of his ſon to the age of eighteen. In this he favoured the ambitious views of his mother Edwiga Eleonora, of Holſtein, Dowager of Charles X. who was appointed by the King her ſon tutoreſs to the young King her grandſon, and Regent of the kingdom, in conjunction with a Council of five perſons.

THE Regent had had a ſhare in the management of public affairs during the reign of her ſon. She was now advanced in years; but her ambition, which was greater than her genius, prompted her to entertain the hopes of poſſeſſing authority for a long time under the King her grandſon. She kept him at as great a diſtance as poſſible from affairs of ſtate. The young Prince paſſed his time either in hunting or in reviewing his troops, and would even ſometimes exerciſe with them; which amuſement ſeemed only to be the natural effect of his youthful

youthful vivacity. He never betrayed any diſſatisfaction ſufficient to alarm the Regent, who flattered herſelf that the diſſipation of mind occaſioned by theſe diverſions would render him incapable of application, and leave her the longer in poſſeſſion of the regal power.

One day in the month of November, in the ſame year his father died, after having reviewed ſeveral regiments, as Piper, the Counſellor of State, was ſtanding by him, he ſeemed to be abſorbed in a profound reverie. "May I take the liberty (ſaid Piper to him) "of asking your Majeſty what you are thinking of so "ſeriouſly?" "I am thinking (replied the Prince) "that I am worthy to command theſe brave fellows; "and I don't like that either they or I ſhould any "longer receive orders from a woman." Piper immediately ſeized this opportunity of making his fortune; but, conſcious that his own intereſt was not ſufficient for the execution of ſuch a dangerous enterprize as the removal of the Queen from the Regency, and the haſtening of the King's majority, he propoſed the affair to Count Axel Sparre, a man of an ardent mind, and who ſought to procure himſelf credit. On being flatterred with the confidence of the King, Sparre entered into his meaſures, and undertook the management of the whole buſineſs, while he was working only to promote the intereſt of Piper. The Counſellors of the Regency were ſoon brought over to the ſcheme, and precipitated the execution of it, in order to recommend themſelves the more effectually to the King.

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They went in a body to propoſe it to the Queen, who by no means expected ſuch a declaration. The States-General were then aſſembled; the Counſellors of the Regency propoſed the affair; there was not a diſſenting voice; the point was carried with a rapidity that nothing could withſtand; ſo that Charles XII. had only to ſignify his deſire of reigning, and in three days the States beſtowed the government upon him. The power and credit of the Queen ſunk in an inſtant; ſhe led afterwards a life of retirement, more ſuitable to her age, though leſs agreeable to her temper. The King was crowned on the 24th of December following, on which he made his entry in Stockholm, on a ſorrel horſe ſhod with ſilver, having a ſceptre in his hand, and a crown upon his head, amidſt the acclamations of a whole people, fond of novelty, and conceiving always great hopes from a young Prince.

The ceremony of the conſecration and coronation belongs to the Archbiſhop of Upſal; almoſt the only privilege that remains to him of the great number that were enjoyed by his predeceſſors. After having anointed the Prince, according to cuſtom, he held the crown in his hand, in order to put it upon his head; when Charles ſnatched it from him, and crowned himſelf, regarding the poor prelate all the while with a ſtern look. The multitude, who are always dazzled by every thing that has an air of grandeur, applauded this action of the King. Even thoſe who had groaned moſt ſeverely under the tyranny of the father, ſuffered them-

themſelves to applaud in the ſon this arrogance which was a preſage of their ſlavery.

CHARLES was no ſooner maſter of the kingdom, than he made Piper his chief confidant, entruſting him at the ſame time with the management of public affairs, making him prime miniſter, though without the name. A few days after he created him a Count, which is a dignity of great eminence in Sweden, and not an empty title, that may be aſſumed without any importance, as in France.

THE beginning of the King's reign gave no very favourable idea of his character; ſo that it was imagined he had been more impatient to reign than worthy of it. He cheriſhed indeed no dangerous paſſion; but his conduct diſcovered nothing but the violences of youth and obſtinacy. He ſeemed to be equally haughty and indolent. The * Ambaſſadors who reſided at his court took him even for a perſon of mean capacity, and repreſented him as ſuch to their reſpective maſters. The Swedes entertained the ſame opinion of him: nobody knew his real character: he did not even know it himſelf, until the ſtorm that ſuddenly aroſe in the North gave him an opportunity of diſplaying his concealed talents.

THREE powerful Princes, taking the advantage of his youth, conſpired, almoſt at the ſame time, to effect his ruin. The firſt was Frederick IV. King of Den-

* *The original letters confirm this.*

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mark, his couſin. The ſecond was Auguſtus, Elector of Saxony, and King of Poland. Peter the Great, Czar of Muſcovy, was the third, and the moſt dangerous. It is neceſſary to unfold the origin of theſe wars, which produced ſuch great events. To begin with Denmark.

Of the two ſiſters of Charles XII. the eldeſt was married to the Duke of Holſtein, a young Prince of an undaunted ſpirit, and of a gentle diſpoſition. The Duke, oppreſſed by the King of Denmark, repaired to Stockholm with his ſpouſe, and, throwing himſelf into the arms of the King, earneſtly implored his aſſiſtance; not only on account of being his brother-in-law, but as he was likewiſe the King of a people who bore an irreconcileable hatred to the Danes.

The ancient Houſe of Holſtein, diſſolved into that of Oldenburg, had been advanced by election to the throne of Denmark in 1449. All the Kingdoms of the North were at that time elective; though the kingdom of Denmark ſoon after became hereditary. One of its Kings, called Chriſtian III. had ſuch an affection for his brother Adolphus, or at leaſt ſuch a regard for his intereſt, as is rarely met with among Princes. He was unwilling to ſee him deſtitute of ſovereign power, and yet he could not diſmember his own dominions. He therefore divided with him the Duchies of Holſtein-Gottorp and Sleſwick, by a whimſical kind of agreement, which was, that the

deſcendants of Adolphus ſhould ever after govern Holſtein in conjunction with the King of Denmark; that thoſe two Duchies ſhould belong to both in common; and that the King of Denmark ſhould be able to do nothing in Holſtein without the Duke, nor the Duke without the King. So ſtrange a union, of which however, there has been within theſe few years a ſimilar inſtance in the ſame family, was, for near the ſpace of eighty years, the ſource of perpetual diſputes between the crown of Denmark and the Houſe of Holſtein-Gottorp; the Kings always endeavouring to oppreſs the Dukes, and the Dukes to render themſelves independent of the Kings. A ſtruggle of this nature had coſt the laſt Duke his liberty and ſovereignty; both which, however, he recovered at the conferences of Altena, in 1689, by the interpoſition of Sweden, England, and Holland, who became guarantees for the execution of the treaty. But as a treaty between Princes is frequently no more than a ſubmiſſion to neceſſity, till the ſtronger ſhall be able to cruſh the weaker, the conteſt was revived with greater virulence than ever between the new King of Denmark and the young Duke; during whoſe abſence at Stockholm the Danes had committed ſome acts of hoſtility in the county of Holſtein, and had entered into a ſecret agreement with the King of Poland to cruſh the King of Sweden himſelf.

FREDERICK AUGUSTUS, Elector of Saxony, whom neither the eloquence nor negociations of the Abbé de

de Polignac, nor the great qualities of the Prince of Conti, his competitor for the throne, had been able to prevent from being choſen King of Poland about two years before, was a Prince ſtill leſs remarkable for his incredible ſtrength of body, than for his bravery and gallantry of mind. His court was, next to that of Lewis XIV. the moſt ſplendid of any in Europe. Never was a prince more generous or munificent, or beſtowed his favours with a better grace. He had purchaſed the votes of one half of the Poliſh nobility, and overawed the other by the approach of a Saxon army. Thinking he ſhould have occaſion for his troops, in order to eſtabliſh himſelf the more firmly on the throne, he wanted a pretext for retaining them in Poland; he therefore reſolved to employ them in attacking the King of Sweden, which he did on the following occaſion.

LIVONIA, the moſt beautiful and the moſt fertile province of the North, belonged formerly to the Knights of the Teutonick Order. The Ruſſians, the Poles, and Swedes had diſputed the poſſeſſion of it. The Swedes had carried it about an hundred years ago; and it had been ſolemnly ceded to them by the Peace of Oliva.

THE late King Charles XI. amidſt his ſeverities to his ſubjects in general, had not ſpared the Livonians. He had ſtripped them of their privileges, and of part of their patrimonies. Patkul, unhappily ſo famous

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afterwards for his tragical death, was deputed by the nobility of Livonia to carry to the throne the complaints of the province. He addreſsed his maſter in a ſpeech, reſpectful indeed, but bold, and full of that manly eloquence which calamity, when joined to courage, inſpires. But Kings too frequently conſider theſe public addreſses as no more than vain ceremonies, which it is cuſtomary to ſuffer, without paying them any regard. Charles XI. however, who could play the hypocrite extremely well, when he was not tranſported by the violence of his paſſion, gently ſtruck Patkul on the ſhoulder: "You have ſpoke "for your country," ſaid he, "like a brave man, "and I eſteem you for it; go on." Notwithſtanding, in a few days after, he cauſed him to be declared guilty of high-treaſon, and, as ſuch, to be condemned to death. Patkul, who had ſecreted himſelf, made his eſcape, and carried his reſentment with him to Poland; where he was afterwards admitted into the preſence of King Auguſtus. Charles XI. was now dead; but Patkul's ſentence was ſtill in force, and his indignation ſtill unabated. He repreſented to the Poliſh Monarch the facility of conquering Livonia, the people of which were provoked to deſpair, and ready to throw off the Swediſh yoke; at the ſame time that their King was a child, and incapable of making any defence. Theſe repreſentations were well received by a Prince already deſirous of making ſo great a conqueſt. Auguſtus had engaged, at his coronation, to exert his utmoſt efforts to recover

er the provinces which Poland had loſt; and he imagined, that, by making an irruption into Livonia, he ſhould at once pleaſe the people, and eſtabliſh his own power; in both which particulars, however plauſible, he at laſt found himſelf diſappointed. Every thing was ſoon got ready for a ſudden invaſion, without even condeſcending to have recourſe to the vain formalities of declarations of war and manifeſtoes. The ſtorm thickened at the ſame time on the ſide of Muſcovy: the monarch who governed that empire deſerves the attention of poſterity.

PETER ALEXIOWITZ, Czar of Ruſſia, had already made himſelf formidable by the battle he had gained over the Turks in 1697, and by the reduction of Aſoph, which opened to him the dominion of the Black Sea. But it was by actions ſtill more glorious than his victories that he aſpired to the name of Great. Muſcovy, or Ruſſia, comprehends the northern parts of Aſia and of Europe, extending from the frontiers of China for the ſpace of fifteen hundred leagues, to the borders of Poland and Sweden. This immenſe country, however, was hardly known to Europe, before the time of Czar Peter. The Muſcovites were leſs civilized than the Mexicans, when diſcovered by Cortes: born the ſlaves of maſters as barbarous as themſelves, they remained in a ſtate of ignorance, in want of all the arts, and in ſuch an inſenſibility of that want, as ſuppreſſed every motive to induſtry. An ancient law, which they held as ſacred, forbade them, under

under pain of death, to leave their native country without permiſſion of their patriarch. This law, enacted with a view to preclude them from all opportunities of becoming ſenſible of their ſlavery, was yet acceptable to a people who, in the depth of their ignorance and miſery, diſdained all commerce with foreign nations.

The æra of the Muſcovites bears date from the Creation of the World; ſince which they conceive 7207 years were elapſed at the beginning of the laſt century, without being able to aſſign any reaſon for this computation. The firſt day of their year anſwered to the thirteenth of September, New Style. The reaſon alledged for this regulation is, that it is moſt probable God created the world in autumn, the ſeaſon when the fruits of the earth are in their full maturity. Thus, the only appearance of knowledge which they had, was founded in groſs error: not one of them ever dreamed that the autumn of Muſcovy might poſſibly be the ſpring of another country, ſituated in an oppoſite climate. It was not long ſince the people at Moſcow were going to burn the Secretary of a Perſian Ambaſſador, who had foretold an eclipſe of the ſun. They did not ſo much as know the uſe of figures; but in all their computations made uſe of little beads ſtrung upon braſs wires. They had no other manner of reckoning in the offices of revenue, not even in the Treaſury of the Czar.

Their

THEIR religion was, and ſtill is, that of the Greek Chriſtians, but mixed with many ſuperſtitious rites, to which they were the more ſtrongly attached, in proportion as they were the more extravagant, and their burthen the more intolerable. Few Muſcovites would dare to eat a pigeon, becauſe the Holy Ghoſt is painted in the form of a dove. They regularly obſerved four Lents in the year; during which time of abſtinence they never preſumed to eat either eggs or milk. God and St. Nicholas were the objects of their worſhip, and next to them the Czar and the Patriarch. The authority of the laſt was as unbounded as the ignorance of the people. He pronounced ſentence of death, and inflicted the moſt cruel puniſhments. without any poſſibility of an appeal from his tribunal. He made a ſolemn proceſſion twice a-year on horſeback, attended by his clergy. The Czar, on foot, held the bridle of his horſe, and the people proſtrated themſelves before him in the ſtreets, as the Tartars do before their Grand Lama. Confeſſion was in uſe among them, but it was only in caſes of the greateſt crimes. In theſe abſolution was neceſſary, but not repentance. They thought themſelves pure in the ſight of God, as ſoon as they received the benediction of their Papas. Thus they paſsed, without remorſe, from confeſſion to theft and murder; and what among other Chriſtians is a reſtraint from vice, with them was an encouragement to wickedneſs. They would not even venture to drink milk on a faſt; although on a feſtival, maſters of families, prieſts, married women,

men, and maids, would make no ſcruple to intoxicate themſelves with brandy. There were religious diſputes, however, among them, as well as in other countries; but their greateſt controverſy was, whether laymen ſhould make the ſign of the croſs with two fingers or with three. One Jacob Nurſoff, in the preceding reign, had raiſed a ſedition in Aſtracan, on the ſubject of this diſpute. There were even ſome fanatics among them, as there are in thoſe civilized nations where every one is a theologian; and Peter, who always carried juſtice into cruelty, cauſed ſome of theſe unhappy wretches, called Voſko-jeſuits, to be committed to the flames.

THE Czar, in his extenſive empire, had many other ſubjects who were not Chriſtians. The Tartars, inhabiting the weſtern coaſts of the Caſpian Sea and the Palus Mæotis, are Mahometans; the Siberians, the Oſtiacks, and the Samoiedes, who lie towards the Frozen Sea, were ſavages, ſome of whom were idolaters, and others had not even the knowledge of a God; and yet the Swedes, who were ſent priſoners among them, were better pleaſed with their manners than with thoſe of the ancient Muſcovites.

PETER ALEXIOWITZ had received an education that tended ſtill more to increaſe the barbariſm of this part of the world. His natural diſpoſition led him to careſs ſtrangers, before he knew what advantages he might derive from their acquaintance. A young Geneveſe

neveſe, named Le Fort, of an ancient family in Geneva, the ſon of a druggiſt. was the firſt inſtrument he employed, in courſe of time, to change the face of affairs in Muſcovy. This young man, ſent by his father to be a merchant at Copenhagen, quitted his buſineſs and followed an Ambaſſador of Denmark to Muſcovy, from that reſtleſſneſs of mind which is always experienced by ſuch as feel themſelves ſuperior to their ſituation. He took it into his head to learn the Ruſſian language. The rapid progreſs which he made in it excited the curioſity of the Czar, who was yet in his youth. Le Fort became acquainted with him; he inſinuated himſelf into his familiarity; he often talked to him of the advantages of commerce and navigation; he told him how Holland, which had never poſſeſſed the hundredth part of the States of Muſcovy, made as great a figure by means of her commerce alone, as the Spains, a ſmall province of which ſhe had formerly been, both uſeleſs and deſpiſed. He entertained him with the refined policy of the Princes of Europe, with the diſcipline of their troops, the police of their cities, and the infinite number of manufactures, arts, and ſciences, which render the Europeans powerful and happy. Theſe diſcourſes awakened the young Emperor as from a profound lethargy; his mighty genius, which a barbarous education had repreſſed but had not been able to deſtroy, unfolded itſelf almoſt at once. He reſolved to be a man, to rule over men, and to create a new nation. Many Princes before him had renounced their crowns from diſguſt to the weight of

buſineſs, but none like him had ceaſed to be a King in order to learn how to govern better. This is what was done by Peter the Great.

He left Muſcovy in 1698, having reigned but two years, and went to Holland, diſguiſed under a common name, as if he had been a domeſtic ſervant of the ſame Mr. Le Fort, whom he ſent in quality of Ambaſſador Extraordinary to the States General. As ſoon as he arrived at Amſterdam, he enrolled himſelf among the ſhipwrights of the India Company's wharf, under the name of Peter Michaeloff, but he was commonly called Peter Bas, or Maſter Peter. He worked in the yard like the other mechanics. At his leiſure-hours he learned ſuch parts of the mathematics as are uſeful to a Prince, fortification, navigation, and the arts of drawing plans. He went into the workmen's ſhops, and examined all their manufactures, in which nothing could eſcape his obſervation. From thence he went over to England, where having perfected himſelf in the art of ſhip-building, he returned to Holland, carefully obſerving every thing that might turn to the advantage of his own country. At length, after two years of travel and labour, to which no man but himſelf would have willingly ſubmitted, he again made his appearance in Muſcovy, with all the arts of Europe in his train. Artiſts of every kind followed him in crowds. Then were ſeen for the firſt time large Ruſſian ſhips in the Baltick, and on the Black Sea and the ocean. Stately buildings, of a regular

regular achitecture, were raiſed among the Ruſſian huts. He founded colleges, academies, printing-houſes, and libraries. The cities were brought under a regular police. The cloaths and cuſtoms of the people were gradually changed, though not without ſome difficulty; and the Muſcovites learned by degrees the true nature of a ſocial ſtate. Even their ſuperſtitious rites were aboliſhed; the dignity of the patriarch was ſuppreſſed; and the Czar declared himſelf the Head of the Church. This laſt enterprize, which would have coſt a Prince leſs abſolute than Peter both his throne and his life, ſuceeded almoſt without oppoſition, and inſured to him the ſucceſs of his other innovations.

AFTER having humbled an ignorant and a barbarous clergy, he ventured to make a trial of inſtructing them, though by that means he ran the riſque of rendering them formidable; but he was too ſenſible of his own power to entertain any fear of it. He cauſed philoſophy and theology to be taught in the few monaſteries that ſtill remained. True it is, this theology ſtill ſavours of that barbarous period in which Peter civilized his people. A perſon of undoubted veracity aſſured me, that he was preſent at a public diſputation, where the point of controverſy was, whether the practice of ſmoking tobacco was a ſin? The reſpondent maintained that it was lawful to get drunk with brandy, but not to ſmoke, becauſe the Holy Scripture ſaith, "that which proceeded out of the "mouth

" mouth defileth a man, and that which entereth into " it doth not defile him."

THE Monks were not pleaſed with this reformation. The Czar had hardly erected printing-houſes, when they made uſe of them to decry him. They declared in print that Peter was Anti-chriſt, for that he deprived the living of their beards, and allowed the dead to be diſſected in his Academy. But another Monk, who aimed at promotion, refuted this book, and proved that Peter could not be Anti-chriſt, becauſe the number 666 was not to be found in his name. The libeller was accordingly broke upon the wheel, and the author of the refutation was made Biſhop of Rezan.

THIS reformer of Muſcovy enacted in particular a very ſalutary law, the want of which reflects diſgrace on many civilized nations. This enacted that no man engaged in the ſervice of the State, no citizen eſtabliſhed in trade, and eſpecially no minor, ſhould retire into a convent.

PETER knew of what infinite conſequence it was to prevent uſeful ſubjects from conſecrating themſelves to idleneſs, and hinder young people from diſpoſing of their liberty at an age when they are incapable of diſpoſing of the leaſt part of their patrimony. But this law, though calculated for the general intereſt of mankind, is daily eluded by the induſtry of the Monks;

as

as if they were in fact gainers by peopling their convents at the expence of their country.

THE Czar not only ſubjected the Church to the State, after the example of the Turkiſh Emperors, but, by a more maſterly ſtroke of policy, diſſolved a militia ſimilar to that of the Janizaries; and accompliſhed in a ſhort time what the Sultans had long in vain attempted. He disbanded the Ruſſian Janizaries, who were called Strelitz, and kept the Czars in ſubjection. This body of ſoldiery, more formidable to their maſters than to their neighbours, conſiſted of about thirty thouſand foot, one half of which remained at Moſcow, while the other was ſtationed upon the frontiers. The pay of the Strelitz was no more than four roubles a-year; but this deficiency was amply compenſated by privileges and extortions. Peter formed at firſt a company of foreigners, among whom he enrolled his own name, and did not think it beneath his dignity to begin the ſervice in the capacity of a drummer, and to perform the duties of that mean office; ſo much did the nation ſtand in need of examples! By degrees he became an officer. He gradually raiſed new regiments; and at laſt, finding himſelf maſter of a well-diſciplined army, he broke the Strelitz, who durſt not diſobey him.

THE cavalry were nearly the ſame with that of Poland, or what the French formerly was, when the kingdom of France was no more than an aſſemblage of

of fiefs. The gentlemen were mounted at their own expence, and fought without diſcipline, and ſometimes with no other arms than a ſabre or a bow, incapable of command, and conſequently of conqueſt.

PETER the Great taught them to obey, both by the example he ſet, and the puniſhment he inflicted; for he ſerved in the quality of a ſoldier and a ſubaltern officer, and as Czar he ſeverely puniſhed the Boyards, that is, the gentlemen, who pretended that it was the privilege of their order not to ſerve but by their own conſent. He eſtabliſhed a regular body to ſerve the artillery, and took five hundred bells from the churches to be converted into cannon. In the year 1714 he had thirteen thouſand pieces of ordnance. He likewiſe formed companies of dragoons, troops very ſuitable to the genius of the Muſcovites, and to the ſize of their horſes, which are ſmall. In 1738 the Ruſſians had thirty regiments of theſe dragoons, conſiſting of a thouſand men each, well-diſciplined and accoutred. He likewiſe eſtabliſhed regiments of huſſars in Ruſſia, and had even a ſchool of engineers, in a country where, before himſelf, no one underſtood the elements of geometry. He was alſo himſelf a good engineer; but his chief excellence lay in his knowledge of naval affairs; he was an able ſea captain, a skilful pilot, a good ſailor, an expert ſhipwright, and his knowledge of theſe arts was the more meritorious, as he was born with a great dread of the water.

IN

In his youth he could not paſs over a bridge without trembling: on all theſe occaſions he cauſed the wooden windows of his coach to be ſhut; but of this conſtitutional weakneſs he ſoon got the better by his courage and reſolution. He cauſed a beautiful harbour to be built at the mouth of the Tanais, near Aſoph, in which he propoſed to keep a number of gallies; and ſome time after, thinking that theſe veſſels, ſo long, light, and flat, would probably ſucceed in the Baltick, he had upwards of three hundred of them built at his favourite city of Peterſburgh. He ſhewed his ſubjects the method of building ſhips with deals only, and taught them the art of navigation. He had even learnt ſurgery, and, in a caſe of neceſſity, has been known to tap a perſon for the dropſy. He was well verſed in mechanics, and inſtructed the workmen,

The revenue of the Czar, when compared to the immenſe extent of his dominions, was indeed inconſiderable. It never amounted to four-and-twenty millions of livres, reckoning the mark at about fifty livres, as we do to-day, though we may not do ſo to-morrow. But he may always be accounted rich, who has it in his power to accompliſh great undertakings. It is not the ſcarcity of money that debilitates a State, it is the want of men, and of men of abilities.

Russia, notwithſtanding the women are fruitful and the men robuſt, is not very populous. Peter himſelf in

in civilizing his dominions, unhappily contributed to the decreaſe of his people. Frequent levies in his wars, which were long and unſucceſsful; nations tranſplanted from the coaſts of the Caſpian Sea to thoſe of the Baltick, deſtroyed by fatigue, or cut off by diſeaſes; three-fourths of the Muſcovite children dying of the ſmall-pox, which is more dangerous in thoſe climates than in any other; in a word, the melancholy effects of a government ſavage for a long time, and barbarous even in its police; these are the cauſes that in this country, comprehending ſo great a part of the continent, there are ſtill vaſt deſarts. Ruſſia is at preſent, ſuppoſed to contain five hundred thouſand families of gentlemen; two hundred thouſand lawyers; ſomething more than five millions of citizens and peaſants, who pay a ſort of land tax; ſix hundred thouſand men in the provinces conquered from the Swedes. The Coſſacks in the Ukraine, and the Tartars that are ſubject to Muſcovy, do not exceed two millions; in fine, it appears that in this immenſe country there are not above fourteen millions of people, that is, a little more than two-thirds of the inhabitants of France.*

While the Czar was thus employed in changing the laws, the manners, the militia, and the very face of his

* *This was written in the year* 1727. *The population of Ruſſia hath greatly increaſed ſince that time, as well by*

his country, he likewiſe reſolved to encreaſe his greatneſs by encouraging commerce, which at once conſtitutes the riches of a particular State, and contributes to the intereſt of the world in general. He undertook to make Ruſſia the centre of trade between Aſia and Europe. He determined to join the Duna, the Volga, and the Tanais, by canals, of which he drew the plans; and thus to open a new paſſage from the Baltick to the Euxine and Caſpian ſeas, and from thoſe ſeas to the Northern Ocean. The port of Archangel, frozen up nine months in the year, and which could not be entered without making a long and dangerous circuit, did not appear to him ſufficiently commodious. So long ago, therefore, as the year 1700, he had formed a deſign of opening a ſeaport on the Baltick that ſhould become the magazine of the North, and of building a city that ſhould prove the capital of his empire.

He had even then attempted the diſcovery of a north-eaſt paſſage to China; and the manufactures of Pekin and Paris were intended to embelliſh his new city.

A Road by land, 754 verſts * long, running through marſhes that were to be drained, was to lead from

by military conqueſt, as by the arts of civil policy, and the care which has been taken to induce foreigners to come to and reſide in the country.

* *A verſt conſiſts of 754 paces.*

Moſcow to his new city. Moſt of theſe projects have been executed by himſelf; and the two Empreſſes, his ſucceſſors, have even improved upon thoſe of his ſchemes that were practicable, and abandoned only ſuch as it was impoſſible to accompliſh.

He always travelled through his dominions as much as his wars would permit; but he travelled like a legiſlator and a naturaliſt; examining Nature everywhere; endeavouring to correct or perfect her; taking himſelf the ſounding of ſeas and rivers; ordering ſluices, viſiting docks, cauſing mines to be worked, aſſaying metals, and directing accurate charts to be drawn, in the execution of which he himſelf aſſiſted.

He built upon a deſart ſpot the imperial city of Petersburgh, containing at preſent ſixty thouſand houſes, the reſidence of a ſplendid court, whoſe amuſements are of the moſt refined taſte. He built the harbour of Cronſtadt, on the Neva, and St. Croix, on the frontiers of Perſia; he erected forts in the Ukraine, and in Siberia; eſtabliſhed offices of admiralty at Archangel, Petersburgh, Aſtracan, and Aſoph; founded arſenals, and built and endowed hoſpitals. All his own houſes were mean, and executed in a bad taſte; but he ſpared no expence in rendering the public buildings grand and magnificent.

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THE ſciences, which in other countries have been the ſlow product of ſo many ages, were, by his care and induſtry, imported into Ruſſia in full perfection. He eſtabliſhed an Academy on the plan of the famous Societies of Paris and London. The Deliſles, the Bulfingers, the Hermannus's, the Bernouilles, and the celebrated Wolf, a man who excelled in every branch of philoſophy, were all invited and brought to Peterſburgh at a great expence. This Academy ſtill ſubſiſts; and the Muſcovites, at length, have philoſophers of their own nation.

HE obliged the young nobility to travel for improvement, and to bring back into Ruſſia the politeneſs of foreign countries. I have myſelf ſeen young Ruſſians who were men of genius and ſcience. It was thus that a ſingle man hath reformed the greateſt empire in the world. It is, however, ſhocking, to reflect, that this reformer of mankind ſhould have been deficient in that firſt of all virtues, the virtue of humanity. Brutality in his pleaſures, ferocity in his manners, and barbarity in his revenges, ſullied the luſtre of his many virtues. He civilized his ſubjects, and yet remained a barbarian. He was conſcious of this, and once ſaid to a magiſtrate of Amſterdam, "I reform my country, but am not able to reform "myſelf." He has executed his ſentence upon criminals with his own hands, and at a debauch at table has ſhewn his addreſs at cutting off heads.

IN

In Africa, there are Princes who thus with their own hands ſhed the blood of their ſubjects; but theſe paſs for barbarians. The death of a ſon, whom he ought to have corrected, or diſinherited, would render the memory of Peter the object of univerſal hatred, were it not that the great and many bleſſings he beſtowed upon his ſubjects, were almoſt ſufficient to excuſe his cruelty to his own offspring.

Such was Czar Peter; and his great projects were little more than in embryo when he joined the Kings of Poland and Denmark againſt a child whom they all deſpiſed. The founder of the Ruſſian empire was ambitious of being a conqueror; and ſuch he thought he might eaſily become by the proſecution of a war which, being ſo well projected, could not fail, he imagined, of proving uſeful to all his deſigns: the art of war was a new art which it was neceſſary to teach his people.

He wanted beſides a port on the eaſt ſide of the Baltick, to facilitate the execution of his ſchemes. He wanted the province of Ingria, which lies to the north-eaſt of Livonia. The Swedes were in poſſeſſion of it, and from them he reſolved to take it by force. His predeceſſors had claims upon Ingria, Eſtonia, and Livonia; and the preſent ſeemed a favourable opportunity of reviving thoſe claims, which had been buried for a hundred years, and had been

been extinguiſhed by treaties. He entered therefore into a league with the King of Poland, to wreſt from the young Charles XII. all the territories that lie between the Gulph of Finland, the Baltick Sea, Poland, and Muſcovy.

BOOK

BOOK II.

ARGUMENT.

A Remarkable and unexpected Change in the Character of Charles.—At the Age of Eighteen he engages in a War againſt Denmark, Poland, and Muſcovy.—Finiſhes that with Denmark in ſix weeks.—Defeats Eighty Thouſand Ruſſians with only Eight Thouſand Swedes.—Marches into Poland.—A Deſcription of Poland and its Government.—Charles gains many Battles, and becomes Maſter of Poland, where he prepares to appoint a King.

THUS did three powerful Sovereigns threaten the infancy of Charles XII. The news of theſe preparations diſmayed the Swedes, and alarmed the Council. All their diſtinguiſhed Generals were dead; and they had every reaſon to tremble under the reign of a young King, who had as yet given them but a bad opinion of his abilities. He hardly ever came to Council for any other purpoſe than to lay his legs acroſs on the table: abſent and indifferent, he never appeared to intereſt himſelf in any thing.

As the Council were one day deliberating, in his preſence, on the dangerous predicament in which they ſtood, ſome of them propoſed to avoid the impending tempeſt by negociations; when the young Prince

Prince immediately roſe with the grave and aſſured air of a man of ſuperior abilities, who had fixed his reſolution. "Gentlemen," ſaid he, "I am reſolved never to begin an unjuſt war, but never to finiſh an "unjuſt one but with the deſtruction of my enemies. "My reſolution is fixed; I will march and attack the "firſt who ſhall declare war; and when I ſhall have "conquered him, I hope to ſtrike terror into the reſt." All the old counſellors, aſtoniſhed at this declaration, looked at each other without daring to anſwer. In ſhort, ſurprized at having ſuch a King, and aſhamed to appear leſs confident than he, they received his orders for the war with admiration.

THEY were ſtill more agreeably ſurprized, when they beheld him renounce at once the moſt innocent amuſements of his youth. From the firſt moment of his preparing himſelf for the war, he began an entire new courſe of his life, from which he never after departed a ſingle moment. Full of the idea of Alexander and Cæſar, he determined to imitate thoſe two heroes in every thing but their vices. He no longer indulged himſelf in magnificence, ſports, and recreations; and reduced his table to the moſt rigid frugality. He had before loved pomp in his dreſs; but he now dreſſed himſelf as a common ſoldier. It was generally ſuppoſed that he had formed a ſtrong attachment to a lady of his court; but whether this ſuppoſition was true or not, it is certain that he from that time renounced all fondneſs for the ſex, not only from

from the fear of being governed by them, but to ſet an example to his ſoldiers, whom he was deſirous of bringing back to the moſt rigid diſcipline; and perhaps, alſo, from the vanity of being deemed the only King who could ſubdue a paſſion ſo difficult to ſurmount. He likewiſe reſolved to abſtain from wine during the reſt of his life. Many people have told me, that he made this reſolution merely to get the better of his inclinations in every thing, and to give an additional luſtre to his ſelf-denial; but by far the greater part aſſured me, that he was determined by thoſe means to puniſh himſelf for an exceſs which he had been guilty of, and for an affront he had offered to a lady at table even in the preſence of the queen his mother. Even if that be true, this ſelf-condemnation of his behaviour, with the abſtinence which he impoſed on himſelf throughout his life, is a ſpecies of heroiſm not leſs to be admired.

His firſt ſtep was to grant aſſiſtance to his brother-in-law the Duke of Holſtein. Eight thouſand men were immediately ſent into Pomerania, a province bordering upon Holſtein, to fortify the Duke againſt the attacks of the Danes. And indeed the Duke had need of them. His dominions were laid waſte, his caſtle of Gottorp taken, and the city of Tonningen preſſed by an obſtinate ſiege, to which the King of Denmark had come in perſon, in order to enjoy a conqueſt which he imagined certain. This ſpark began to throw the Empire into a flame. On the one ſide, the

the Saxon troops of the King of Poland, thoſe of Brandenburgh, Wolfenbuttle, and Heſſe Caſſel, advanced to join the Danes. On the other, the eight thouſand men ſent by the King of Sweden, the troops of Hanover and Zell, and three regiments of Dutch, came to aſſiſt the Duke. At the time the little country of Holſtein became thus the theatre of war, two ſquadrons, the one from England, and the other from Holland, appeared in the Baltick. Theſe two States were guarantees of the treaty of peace of Altena, which treaty the Danes had broken through; the Engliſh and Dutch therefore were in earneſt, at this time, to ſupport the oppreſſed Duke of Holſtein, becauſe it was for the intereſt of their commerce to check the growing power of the King of Denmark. They knew that the Daniſh King, being once maſter of the paſſage of the Sound, would impoſe the moſt oppreſſive laws on the mercantile nations, as ſoon as ever he was in a ſituation to do it with impunity. This mutual intereſt has long engaged the Dutch and Engliſh to maintain, as much as poſſible, the balance of power between the Northern Princes: they therefore joined the young King of Sweden, who appeared in danger of being cruſhed by the combination of ſo many enemies, and ſupported him for the ſame reaſon that the others attacked him—Becauſe they looked upon him as incapable of defending himſelf.

CHARLES was amuſing himſelf with hunting the bear, when he received the news of the Saxons having

made an irruption into Livonia: the manner in which he practiſed this amuſement was as novel as dangerous; he uſed no other arms than forked ſticks, and a ſmal net fixed to ſome trees; a bear of an inconceivable ſize ran directly at the King, who brought it down to the ground, after a long ſtruggle, by the aid only of the net and his ſtick. It muſt be confeſsed, that, in reflecting on ſuch adventures, on the perſonal ſtrength of King Auguſtus, and the travels of Czar Peter, one would be apt to think we lived in the days of Hercules and Theſeus.

CHARLES ſet out on his firſt campaign the eighth of May, New Style, in the year 1700; when he quitted Stockholm, to whic h he never after returned. An innumerable crowd of people accompanied him as far as the port of Carlſcroon, offering up prayers for his ſucceſs, and with tears expreſſing their admiration. Before he left Sweden, he eſtabliſhed at Stockholm a Council of defence, compoſed of ſeveral Senators, whoſe duty it was to take care of every thing that regarded the navy, the army, and the fortifications of the country. The body of the Senate was to regulate proviſionally every thing in the interior part of the kingdom. Having thus eſtabliſhed a regular mode of adminiſtration in his dominions, his mind, diveſted of every other care, was entirely taken up with the war. His fleet conſiſted of three-and-forty ſhips; that in which he himſelf ſailed was called "The King Charles," and was the largeſt that had ever been ſeen. carrying an hundred and twenty guns. In this ſhip Count

Count Piper, his firſt miniſter of State, General Renſchild, and the Count de Guiſcard, Ambaſſador from France to Sweden, embarked along with him. He joined the ſquadrons of the allies, when the Daniſh fleet declining the combat, gave the three combined fleets an opportunity of approaching Copenhagen nigh enough to throw into it ſeveral ſhells.

CERTAIN it is that it was the King himſelf who then propoſed to General Renſchild to make a deſcent, and to beſiege Copenhagen by land, while it was thus blocked up by ſea. Renſchild was aſtoniſhed at a propoſal which ſhewed equal marks of ſkill, and courage in a Prince ſo young and ſo unexperienced. Every thing was immediately prepared for the deſcent, and orders given for the embarkation of five thouſand men, who lay upon the coaſts of Sweden, and joined the troops they had on board. The King quitted his large ſhip, and went into a frigate of leſs weight: they then began by ſending off three hundred grenadiers, in ſmall ſhallops; and among theſe were ſome ſmall flat-bottomed boats, which carried the faſcines, the chevaux-de-frize, and the implements of the pioneers; then followed five hundred men in other ſhallops; and laſtly came the King's choſen ſhips of war, together with two Engliſh and two Dutch frigates, who were to favour the debarkation, under cover of their cannon.

COPENHAGEN, the capital of Denmark, is ſituated in the Iſle of Zealand, in the midſt of a beautiful plain

plain, having the Sound on the north-weſt, and the Baltick Sea on the eaſt, where the King of Sweden then lay. At this unexpected movement of the veſſels, which threatened a deſcent, the inhabitants confounded by the inactivity of their own fleet, and by the movements of the Swediſh veſſels, waited with terror to ſee on what part the ſtorm would fall. The Swediſh fleet ſtopped over-againſt Humblebeck, about ſeven miles from Copenhagen, at which place the Danes inſtantly aſſembled their cavalry. Their foot were poſted behind entrenchments, and all their artillery they could bring up was turned againſt the Swedes.

THE King then quitted his frigate, and got into the firſt barge, at the head of his guards; when the French Ambaſſador ſtanding next to him, he ſaid to him in Latin (for he would never ſpeak French), "You "have nothing, Mr. Ambaſſador, to do with the "Danes; you need go no farther, if you pleaſe." "Sire," anſwered the Count de Guiſcard in French, "the King my maſter ordered me to reſide with your "Majeſty; I flatter myſelf you will not baniſh me "your court, which was never more brilliant than it "is to day." In ſaying this, he gave his hand to the King, who leaped into the barge, into which Count Piper and the Ambaſſador immediately followed. They advanced under ſhelter of the cannon of the ſhips which favoured their landing. The long-boats were as yet but three hundred paces from the ſhore, when Charles, impatient at their ſlow motion, threw himſelf from his barge into the ſea, ſword in hand having

having the water above his waiſt: his Miniſters, the French Ambaſſador, the officers and ſoldiers immediately followed his example, and marched to the ſhore, in ſpite of a ſhower of the enemy's muſquetry. The King, who had never in his life heard a volley of Muſkets loaded with ball, demanded of Major-general Stuart, whom he perceived near him, what it was that occaſioned the whizzing in his ears? "it is the noiſe of the "muſket-balls that they fire upon you," ſaid the Major to him. "Good!" replied the King; "then from "henceforward that ſhall be my muſic." At this inſtant the Major, who had explained the noiſe made by the muſket-ſhot, received one in his ſhoulder; and a lieutenant dropt down dead on the other ſide of the King.

It generally happens that the troops who are attacked in their trenches are beaten, becauſe thoſe who make the attack always poſſeſs an impetuoſity, which thoſe who merely defend themſelves can never arrive at, beſides, the waiting the enemy's approach is often an acknowledgment of their own weakneſs, and of their adverſary's ſuperiority. The Daniſh cavalry and militia, after a feeble reſiſtance, took to flight. The King, thus become maſter of their entrenchments, fell upon his knees to return thanks to God for this firſt ſucceſs of his arms. He immediately cauſed redoubts to be raiſed towards the town, and marked himſelf a place for the encampment. In the mean time he ſent back his tranſports to Schonen, a part of Sweden bordering upon Copenhagen, for a reinforcement of

nine

nine thouſand men. Every thing conſpired to favour the vivacity of Charles; theſe troops were already aſſembled on the ſhore, and ready to embark; accordingly the next day a favourable wind brought them to him.

THIS tranſportation was effected in the ſight of the Daniſh fleet, which did not dare to advance. Copenhagen, being intimidated, immediately diſpatched deputies to the King. to beſeech him not to bombard the town. He received them on horſeback at the head of his regiment of guards, and the deputies threw themſelves on their knees before him. He made the town pay him four hundred thouſand rix-dollars, and ordered them to bring in all ſorts of proviſions to the camp, for which he promiſed faithfully to pay. They carried him the proviſions, becauſe it was neceſſary to obey, although they did not much expect that the conquerors would have ſo much condeſcenſion: the carriers, however, were greatly aſtoniſhed at being paid generouſly, and without delay, by the loweſt ſoldiers in the army. There had long prevailed among the Swediſh troops a ſtrict diſcipline, which had not a little contributed to this victory; and the young King increaſed its ſeverity. There was not a ſoldier that dared to refuſe payment for what he bought, ſtill leſs to go a-plundering, nor even to go out of the camp. He did ſtill more, for in a victory his troops did not ſtrip the dead till they had received his permiſſion; and he eaſily brought them to obſerve this

this law. Prayers were regularly ſaid in his camp twice a-day, at ſeven o'clock in the morning, and at four in the afternoon; at which he never failed to aſſiſt in perſon, and to ſet the ſoldiers an example of piety as well as of valour. His camp, much better regulated than even the city of Copenhagen, had every thing in abundance: the peaſants preferred ſelling their commodities to the Swedes their enemies, rather than to the Danes, who did not pay them ſo well. Even the citizens were obliged to come, more than once, to ſeek in the camp of the King of Sweden thoſe proviſions which their own markets failed to furniſh.

THE King of Denmark was at this time in Holſtein, whither he ſeemed to have gone for no other purpoſe than to raiſe the ſiege of Tonningen. He ſaw the Baltick Sea covered with the enemies ſhips, a young conqueror already maſter of Zealand, and ready to ſeize on his capital. He therefore cauſed it to be publiſhed throughout his dominions, that thoſe who took up arms againſt the Swedes ſhould have their liberty. This declaration was of great weight in a country formerly free, but in which, at that time, all the peaſants, and even many of the citizens, were ſlaves. Charles ſent word to the King of Denmark that he made war only to oblige him to make peace, and that he muſt either reſolve to do juſtice to the Duke of Holſtein, or ſee Copenhagen deſtroyed, and his kingdom put to the fire and ſword. The Dane was too happy in having to do with a conqueror who piqued himſelf

himſelf on his juſtice A congreſs was aſſembled in the town of Travendal, on the frontiers of Holſtein. The King of Sweden would not ſuffer the negociations to be delayed by the arts of Miniſters, but was determined that the treaty ſhould be finiſhed with the ſame rapidity with which he had deſcended into Zealand. It was, in effect, concluded on the fifth of Auguſt, to the advantage of the Duke of Holſtein, who was indemnified for all the expences of the war, and delivered from oppreſſion. The King of Sweden, ſatisfied with having ſuccoured his ally, and humbled his enemy, would accept of nothing for himſelf. Thus Charles XII. at eighteen years of age, began and finiſhed this war in leſs than ſix weeks.

It was preciſely at this time that the King of Poland inveſted the town of Riga, the capital of Livonia, and the Czar advanced, on the ſide of the eaſt, at the head of a hundred thouſand men. Riga was defended by the old Count d'Alberg, a Swediſh general, who, at the age of eighty, joined the fire of a young man to the experience of ſixty campaigns. Count Fleming, afterwards Miniſter of Poland, a great man in the field as well as in the cabinet, and Patkul the Livonian, preſſed the ſiege under the inſpection of the King; but in ſpite of ſeveral advantages that the beſiegers had gained, the experience of the old Count d'Alberg rendered their efforts uſeleſs, and the King of Poland deſpaired of taking the town. He at laſt laid hold of an honourable pretence for raiſing the ſiege.

Riga

Riga was full of merchandize belonging to the Dutch. The States-General ordered their Ambaſſador at the court of Auguſtus to make repreſentations to him on that head. The King of Poland needed not much intreaty. He conſented to raiſe the ſiege rather than occaſion the leaſt damage to his allies; who were not aſtoniſhed at this exceſs of complaiſance, of which they knew the true cauſe.

THERE remained then nothing more for Charles to do, to finiſh his firſt campaign, than to march againſt his rival in glory, Peter Alexiowitz. He was the more exaſperated againſt him, as there were at that time at Stockholm three Muſcovite Ambaſſadors, who had juſt ſworn to the renewal of an inviolable peace. He could not comprehend, as he piqued himſelf on a moſt rigid integrity, that a legiſlator, like the Czar, could make a jeſt of what ought to be ſo ſacred. The young Prince, full of honour himſelf, did not imagine that there could be a ſyſtem of morality for Kings different from that for individuals. The Emperor of Muſcovy had juſt publiſhed a manifeſto, which he had much better have ſuppreſſed. He there alledged that the reaſon of his making war was, that he had not ſufficient honour paid him when he paſſed *incognito* through Riga; and likewiſe that they ſold their proviſions to his Ambaſſadors at too dear a rate. It was for theſe injuries that he ravaged Ingria with eighty thouſand men.

He appeared before Narva, at the head of this great army, on the firſt of October, at a ſeaſon of the year more ſevere in this climate than it is in the month of January at Paris. The Czar, who in this inclement ſeaſon would ſometimes ride poſt four hundred leagues to ſee a mine or a canal, was not more careful of his troops than of himſelf. Beſides, he knew that the Swedes, ſince the time of Guſtavus Adolphus, could make war in the midſt of winter as well as in ſummer; he, therefore, wiſhed to accuſtom the Ruſſians likewiſe to know no diſtinction of ſeaſons, and to render them, one day, not in the leaſt inferior to the Swedes. In this manner, at a time when the ice and ſnow obliged other nations, even in temperate climates, to ſuſpend the war, did the Czar Peter beſiege Narva, within thirty degrees of the Pole, while Charles XII. advanced to relieve it. The Czar was no ſooner arrived before the place, than he haſtened to put in practice what he had juſt learned in his travels. He marked out his camp, fortified it on every ſide, raiſed redoubts at due diſtances, and opened the trenches himſelf. He had given the command of his army to the Duke de Croi, a German, and a ſkilful general, but who, at that time, was little aſſiſted by the Ruſſian officers. As for himſelf, he held no other rank in his own troops than that of a lieutenant. He thus ſet the example of military obedience to the nobility, who were till then undiſciplined, and who were only uſed to govern ill-armed ſlaves, without experience or order. It was not to be wondered at, that

that he who turned carpenter at Amſterdam to procure himſelf fleets, ſhould ſerve as lieutenant at Narva to teach his country the art of war.

THE Ruſſians are robuſt, indefatigable, and perhaps as brave as the Swedes; but time and diſcipline alone can tender troops warlike and invincible. The only regiments from which any thing was expected were commanded by German officers, but they were few in number. The reſt were barbarians, forced from the foreſts, and covered with the skins of wild beaſts; ſome were armed with arrows and ſome with clubs; few of them had fuſees; none had ſeen a regular ſiege; nor was there a good gunner in the whole army. A hundred and fifty cannon, which ought to have reduced the little town of Narva to aſhes, were ſcarcely able to make a breach; while, on the other hand, the artillery of the city deſtroyed at every diſcharge whole ranks of the enemy in their trenches. Narva was almoſt without fortification; and the Baron de Hoorn, who commanded it, had not a thouſand regulars; and yet this innumerable army could not reduce it in ten weeks.

IT was the fifteenth of November when the Czar was apprized that the King of Sweden, having croſſed the ſea with two hundred tranſports, was upon the march to the relief of Narva. The Swedes were but twenty thouſand ſtrong; yet the Czar had no ſuperiority but in number. Far then from deſpiſing his

his enemy, he employed every art he was maſter of to overpower him. Not content with eighty thouſand men, he prepared another army to oppoſe him, and to croſs him at every turn. He had already ordered near thirty thouſand men, who advanced by long marches from Pleskow. He then took a ſtep which would have rendered him contemptible, if a legiſlator who had performed ſo many great exploits could be made ſo. He quitted his camp, where his preſence was neceſſary, in queſt of this freſh body of men, which might have arrived very well without him, and appeared by this behaviour to be afraid of engaging in an intrenched camp a young and unexperienced Prince, who might come to attack him.

But be this as it may, he wanted to incloſe Charles between two armies. This was not all; thirty thouſand men detached from the camp which lay before Narva, were poſted a league from the city, on the road along which the King of Sweden was to paſs: twenty thouſand Strelits were placed at a greater diſtance on the ſame road, and five thouſand others formed an advanced guard. All theſe troops Charles was obliged to march over before he could arrive at the camp, which was fortified with a rampart and a double ditch. The King of Sweden had landed at Pernaw, in the Gulph of Riga, with about ſixteen thouſand of his infantry, and a little more than four thouſand horſe. From Pernaw he haſtened his march to Revel, followed by all his cavalry, and only four thouſand foot. As he

he always marched on firſt, without waiting for the reſt of his troops, he ſoon found himſelf, with his eight thouſand men only, near the advanced poſts of the enemy. He did not heſitate a moment about attacking them; which he did, one after the other, without giving them time to be acquainted with what a ſmall number they had to engage. The Muſcovites ſeeing the Swedes thus ruſh upon them, thought they had the whole army to encounter, and the advanced guard of five thouſand men, who were poſted among the rocks, a ſtation in which one hundred reſolute men might have repulſed a whole army, betook themſelves to flight on the firſt approach of the Swedes. The twenty thouſand men who were behind, ſeeing their companions fly, took the alarm, and carried diſorder with them into the camp. All the poſts were carried in two days; and what upon other occaſions would have been counted for three victories, did not retard the march of the King a ſingle hour. At laſt he appeared, with his eight thouſand men, fatigued with ſo long a march, before a camp of eighty thouſand Muſcovites, defended by one hundred and fifty pieces of cannon; and ſcarcely had the troops taken a ſhort repoſe, when without deliberating he gave orders for the attack.

THE ſignal was two fuſees, and the word in German, "With the aid of God." A General Officer having repreſented to him the greatneſs of the danger, "Why! do you imagine," ſaid he to him, "that with "my

"my eight thouſand brave Swedes, I ſhall not be able "to march over the bodies of eighty thouſand Muſ- "covites?" A moment after, fearing that there appeared a little gaſconade in theſe words, he ran after the Officer himſelf: "Are you not then of my opi- "nion?" ſaid he to him; "have I not a double ad- "vantage over my enemies? the one, that their ca- "valry can do them no ſervice; and the other, that "the place being ſo narrow, their great number will "but incommode them; and therefore I ſhall in re- "ality be ſtronger than they." The Officer did not care to be of a different opinion; and they marched againſt the Muſcovites, about mid-day, on the 30th of November 1700.

As ſoon as the cannon of the Swedes had made a breach in their intrenchments, they advanced with their bayonets fixed on their fuſees, having at their backs a furious ſhower of ſnow, which came in the face of the enemy. The Ruſſians ſtood their ground for half an hour, without quitting their ſide of the trenches. The King made his attack upon the right of the camp, where the quarters of the Czar were, hoping to encounter him, not knowing that the Emperor himſelf was gone to ſeek the forty thouſand men who were expected every moment to arrive. At the firſt diſcharge of the enemy's muſkets, the King received a ſhot in his neck; but it being a ſpent ball, it lodged in the plaits of his black cravat, and did him no harm. His horſe was killed under him. Mr de Spart told me that

that the King ſprang nimbly upon another horſe, ſaying, " Theſe gentry here make me do my exerciſe ;" and continued fighting and giving orders with the ſame preſence of mind. After three hours engagement, the intrenchments were forced on every ſide. The King followed the right of the enemy as far as the river Narva with his left wing, if about four thouſand men who were purſuing near forty thouſand can be ſo called. The bridge breaking under the fugitives, the river was in a moment filled with the dead. The others, deſperate, returned to their camp, without knowing where they went ; they there found ſome barracks, behind which they poſted themſelves. There they defended themſelves for ſome time, not being able to make their eſcape, but at laſt their Generals Dolgorouky, Gollofkin, and Fédérowits, came and ſurrendered themſelves to the King, and laid their arms at his feet. At the ſame time arrived the Duke de Croi, General of the army, who likewiſe ſurrendered himſelf with thirty Officers.

CHARLES received all theſe priſoners of diſtinction with as much politeneſs, and in as friendly a manner, as if he had been paying them the honours of an entertainment in his own court. He detained none but the Generals. All the ſubaltern officers and ſoldiers were conducted, unarmed, as far as the river Narva ; and were there furniſhed with boats, that they might paſs over to their own country. In the mean time night approached, and the Muſcovites on the right ſtill continued

tinued fighting. The Swedes had not loſt fifteen hundred men; while eighteen thouſand Muſcovites had been killed in their intrenchments, a great number drowned, and many had paſſed the river; yet there ſtill remained a ſufficient number in the camp to have entirely deſtroyed the Swedes. But it is not the number of the dead, it is the terror of the ſurvivors that occaſions the loſs of battles. The King took the advantage of the ſmall part of the day that remained, to ſeize the enemy's artillery. He poſted himſelf advantageouſly between their camp and the town, where he ſlept ſome hours on the ground, wrapped up in his cloak, waiting for day-break, that he might fall on the enemy's left wing, which was not yet entirely routed. But at two o'clock in the morning, General Wade, who commanded that wing, having heard of the gracious reception the King had given to the other Generals, and in what manner he had diſmiſſed all the ſubaltern officers and ſoldiers, ſent to beſeech the ſame favour. The conqueror told him, that he had nothing to do but to approach at the head of his army, and lay down his arms and colours at his feet. Accordingly this General ſoon after appeared with his Muſcovites, who were about thirty thouſand in number. They marched uncovered, ſoldiers and officers, through leſs than ſeven thouſand Swedes. The ſoldiers in paſſing before the King, threw their guns and ſwords upon the ground, and the officers laid their enſigns and colours at his feet. He cauſed the whole of this multitude to be conducted over the river, without detaining a ſingle ſoldier priſoner. If he had

kept

kept them, the number of the priſoners would have been at leaſt five times greater than that of the conquerors.

He then entered victorious into Narva, accompanied by the Duke de Croi, and other General Officers of the Muſcovites. He cauſed their ſwords to be returned them; and knowing that they wanted money, and that the merchants of Narva would not lend them any, he ſent a thouſand ducats to the Duke de Croi, and five hundred to each of the Muſcovite Officers; who could not ceaſe admiring this treatment, of which they had not even an idea. A relation of the victory was immediately drawn up to ſend to Stockholm, and to the allies of Sweden; but the King ſtruck out with his own hand every thing which appeared too much in praiſe of himſelf, and to reflect on the Czar. His modeſty could not, however, prevent them from ſtriking at Stockholm, ſeveral medals, to perpetuate the memory of theſe events. Among others, they ſtruck one which repreſented the King, on one ſide, ſtanding on a pedeſtal, to which were chained a Muſcovite, a Dane, and a Pole; on the other ſide was a Hercules, armed with his club, having under his feet a Cerberus, with this inſcription: *Tres uno contrudit ictu.*

Among the priſoners taken at the battle of Narva, there was one who exhibited a ſtriking inſtance of the revolutions of fortune: he was the eldeſt ſon and heir of the King of Georgia; he was called the Czaraſis

Artſchelou. This title of Czaraſis ſignifies a Prince, or ſon of the Czar, among the Tartars, as well as in Muſcovy; for the word Czar, or Tſar, meant a King among the ancient Scythians, from whom all theſe people are deſcended, and is not derived from the Cæſars of Rome, ſo long unknown to theſe barbarians. His father Mitelleſki, Czar, and maſter of the moſt beautiful part of the country which lies between the mountains of Ararat and the eaſtern coaſts of the Black Sea, had been driven from his throne by his own ſubjects in 1688, and had choſen rather to throw himſelf into the arms of the Emperor of Muſcovy, than have recourſe to the Turks. The ſon of this King, at the age of nineteen, deſired to follow Peter the Great in his expedition againſt the Swedes, and was taken fighting by ſome Finland ſoldiers, who had already ſtripped him, and were going to kill him, when Count Renſchild reſcued him from their hands, clothed him, and preſented him to his maſter. Charles ſent him to Stockholm, where this unhappy Prince died in a few years after. The King, on ſeeing him depart, could not help making, in the hearing of his Officers, a natural reflection on the ſtrange deſtiny of an Aſiatic Prince, born at the foot of Mount Caucaſus, going to live a captive among the ſnows of Sweden. "It is," ſays he, "as if I were one day to be a priſoner among "the Tartars of the Crimea." Theſe words made no impreſſion at the time; but in the ſequel they were remembered too well, when an event turned them into a prediction.

THE

THE Czar was advancing by long marches with the army of forty thouſand Ruſſians, thinking to ſurround his enemy on all ſides; when he heard, before he had proceeded half way, of the battle of Narva, and the diſperſion of his whole camp. He was not ſo obſtinate as to think of attacking with his forty thouſand men, without experience or diſcipline, a conqueror who had juſt deſtroyed eighty thouſand men in their intrenchments. He returned upon his footſteps, and purſued without ceaſing the deſign of diſciplining his troops, at the ſame time that he civilized his ſubjects. "I know very well," ſaid he, "the Swedes "will beat us for a long time, but in the end they "themſelves will teach us to beat them." Muſcow, his capital, was in terror and confuſion at this defeat. Nay, ſuch was the pride and ignorance of this people, that they imagined they had been conquered by a power more than human, and that the Swedes were real magicians. This opinion was ſo general, that public prayers were ordered to be put up on this occaſion to St. Nicholas, patron of Muſcovy. This prayer is too ſingular not to be repeated. It is as follows:

"O THOU, who art our perpetual conſoler in all our "adverſities, great St. Nicholas, infinitely powerful, "by what ſin have we offended thee in our ſacrifices, "kneelings, bowings, and thankſgivings, that thou "haſt thus abandoned us? We have implored thy aſ"ſiſtance againſt theſe terrible inſolent, enraged, dread"ful, and unconquerable deſtroyers, when like lions

"and

" and bears who have loſt their young, they have at-
" tacked us, terrified, wounded and killed by thou-
" ſands us thy people. As it is impoſſible that this
" can be without ſorcery and inchantment, we be-
" ſeech thee, O great St. Nicholas, to be our cham-
" pion and our ſtandard-bearer, to deliver us from
" this tribe of ſorcerers, and to drive them far from
" our frontiers, with the recompence that is their due."

In the mean time that the Muſcovites were com-plaining to St. Nicholas of their defeat, Charles XII. returned thanks to God, and prepared himſelf for new victories.

The King of Poland had reaſon to expect that his enemy, being conqueror over the Danes and Muſco-vites, would preſently fall upon him; he therefore united himſelf firmer than ever with the Czar. Theſe two Princes agreed upon an interview, that they might take their meaſures in concert. They met at Birzen, a ſmall town in Lithuania, without any of thoſe formalities which only ſerve to retard buſineſs, and which were not ſuited either to their ſituation or their humour. The Princes of the North ſee each other with a familiarity which is not yet eſtabliſhed in the ſouthern parts of Europe. Peter and Auguſtus paſ-ſed five days together in pleaſures which bordered upon exceſs; for the Czar, though he wanted to re-form his nation, could never correct in himſelf his dangerous propenſity to debauchery.

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THE King of Poland engaged himſelf to furniſh the Czar with fifty thouſand German troops, which were to be hired of different Princes, and for which the Czar was to pay. The Czar on his ſide was to ſend fifty thouſand Ruſſians into Poland, to learn the art of war, and promiſed to pay to Auguſtus three millions of rix-dollars in two years. This treaty if it had been executed, might have been fatal to the King of Sweden: it was a ready and ſure method of rendering the Muſcovites good ſoldiers: it was, perhaps, forging chains for a part of Europe.

CHARLES prepared himſelf to prevent the King of Poland from reaping the fruit of this league. After having paſſed the winter at Narva, he appeared in Livonia, in the neighbourhood of Riga, the very town which Auguſtus had in vain beſieged, The Saxon troops were poſted along the river Duna, which is very broad in that place: Charles, who was on the other ſide of the river, was obliged to diſpute their paſſage. The Saxons were not commanded by their Prince, he being ſick; but were headed by the Mareſchal de Stenau, who took the office of General; under whom Prince Ferdinand Duke of Courland commanded; and that very Patkul now defended his country againſt Charles XII. ſword in hand, who formerly vindicated its rights with his pen, at the hazard of his life, againſt Charles XI. The King of Sweden had cauſed ſome large boats to be built on a new plan, the ſides of which were much higher than ordinary, and could be raiſed or let down like a draw-bridge. When raiſed they covered

the

the troops on board; and when let down, they ſerved as bridges to land them. He made uſe alſo of another artifice. Having remarked that the wind blew from the north, where he lay, to the ſouth, where the enemy's camps were, he ordered that they ſhould ſet fire to a quantity of wet ſtraw; from which a thick ſmoke ariſing it ſpread itſelf over the river, preventing the Saxons from ſeeing his troops, or obſerving what he was about. Under the cover of this cloud, he ordered ſeveral barks to put off full of the like wet fuel; ſo that the cloud always increaſing, and driven by the wind into the eyes of the enemy, made it impoſſible for them to know whether the King was paſſing the river or not. Mean while he alone conducted the execution of his ſtratagem. Having got over the greater part of the river, "Well," ſays he to General Renſchild," the "Duna will be as favourable to us as the ſea of Copen-"hagen; believe me, General, we ſhall beat them." He arrived in a quarter of an hour at the other ſide; and was mortified that he was the fourth perſon that leaped on ſhore. He immediately landed his cannon, and formed a line of battle, while the enemy, blinded with ſmoke, could not oppoſe him, except by a few random ſhot. The wind having diſperſed the ſmoke, the Saxons ſaw the King of Sweden already advaning towards them.

MARESCHAL STENAU loſt not a moment: ſcarce had he perceived the Swedes, when he fell on them with the beſt part of his cavalry. The violent ſhock of this body

body falling upon the Swedes at the inſtant that they were forming their battalions, threw them into diſorder They gave way, were broken, and purſued even into the river. The King of Sweden rallied them in a moment in the middle of the water, as eaſily as if he had been exerciſing at a review; after which his ſoldiers marched more compact than before, repulſed Mareſchal Stenau, and advanced into the plain, Stenau finding that his troops were aſtoniſhed, like an able general, made them retire into a dry place, flanked with a moraſs and a wood, where his artillery lay. The advantage of the ground, and the time thus given to the Saxons to recover their firſt ſurprize, reſtored to them their former courage. Charles did not heſitate to attack them; he had fifteen thouſand men with him; Stenau and the Duke of Courland about twelve thouſand, with no other artillery than one diſmounted iron cannon. The battle was obſtinate and bloody; the Duke had two horſes killed under him: he penetrated three times into the center of the King's guard: but at laſt having been knocked off his horſe by a blow with the butt-end of a muſket, diſorder prevailed throughout his army, which no longer diſputed the victory. His cuiraſſiers carried him off with great difficulty, bruiſed and half dead, from the thickeſt of the fight, and from under the horſes heels, which trampled on him.

The King of Sweden, after his victory, flew to Mittau, the capital of Courland. All the towns of this

this Dutchy ſurrendered to him at diſcretion, ſo that it was a journey rather than a conqueſt. He paſſed without delay into Lithuania, conquering as he went along. He felt a flattering ſatisfaction, and he confeſſed it, when he entered as conqueror the town of Birzen, where the King of Poland and the Czar had conſpired againſt him ſome months before.

It was in this place that he firſt conceived the deſign of dethroning the King of Poland, by the hands of the Poles themſelves. Being one day at table, his mind entirely taken up with this enterprize, and obſerving his uſual temperance of diet, he was wrapped in profound ſilence, and ſeemed abſorbed in the greatneſs of his conceptions, when a German Colonel, who was preſent at dinner, obſerved, loud enough to be heard, that the repaſt which the Czar and the King of Poland had made in the ſame place, was ſomewhat different from that of his Majeſty. "Yes," ſaid the King, riſing, "and I ſhall the "more eaſily ſpoil their digeſtion." In ſhort, intermixing a little policy with the force of his arms, he did not delay to prepare the event which he had meditated.

Poland, a part of the ancient Sarmatia, is a little larger than France, but leſs populous, though it is more ſo than Sweden. Its inhabitants were converted to chriſtianity only about ſeven hundred and fifty years ago. It is very ſingular that the language of the Romans,

Romans, who never penetrated into this country, is at this time ſpoken no where in common but in Poland; there every body ſpeaks Latin, even among the very ſervants. This extenſive country is very fertile; and the people are conſequently leſs induſtrious. The artiſts and traders you meet with in Poland, are Scots, French, and Jews, who buy at a low price, corn, cattle, and the different commodities of the country; theſe they diſpoſe of at Dantzick and in Germany, and ſell to the nobles at a high price, to gratify the only ſpecies of luxury which they know and love. Thus this country, watered with the moſt beautiful rivers, rich in paſtures, in ſalt mines, and covered with luxuriant crops, remains poor in ſpite of its plenty, becauſe the people are ſlaves, and the nobility are proud and indolent.

Its government is the moſt perfect model of the ancient government of the Goths and Celtæ, which has been corrected or altered every where elſe. It is the only State that has preſerved the name of a Republic with the Royal dignity.

Every gentleman has a right to give his vote in the election of a King; and may even be elected himſelf. This moſt eſtimable right is attended with the greateſt abuſes; the throne is almoſt always put up to auction; and as a Pole is ſeldom rich enough to buy it, it has been often ſold to ſtrangers. The nobility and clergy defend their rights againſt the King, and deprive the

reſt of the nation of theirs. All the people are ſlaves; ſuch is the deſtiny of men, that the greater number are every where, by ſome means or other, ſubjected to the leſs. There the peaſant ſows not for himſelf, but for his lord; to whom himſelf, his lands, and the labour of his hands belong, and who can ſell him, or cut his throat, as he would the beaſts in his field. All who are gentlemen are independent. There muſt be an aſſembly of the whole nation to try him in a criminal cauſe; and as he cannot be ſeized till he is condemned, he is hardly ever puniſhed. There is a great number of poor: theſe engage in the ſervices of the moſt powerful, receive a ſalary, and do the meaneſt offices for it. They like better to ſerve even their equals, than to enrich themſelves by commerce, and as they dreſs their maſters horſes give themſelves the title of electors of Kings, and deſtroyers of Tyrants.

WHOEVER ſees the King of Poland in the pomp of royal majeſty, would believe him the moſt abſolute Prince in Europe; he is, however, the leaſt ſo. The Poles really make that contract with him, which in other nations is mere ſuppoſition between the King and his ſubjects. The King of Poland, even at his conſecration, and in ſwearing to the *pacta conventa*, abſolves his ſubjects from the oath of obedience, in caſe he violates the laws of the Republic.

HE fills up all offices, and confers all honours. Nothing is hereditary in Poland but the land, and the rank

rank of the nobility. The ſon of a palatine, or of the King, has no right to the dignities of his father; but there is this great difference between the King and the Republic, that the former can take away no office after he has given it; while the Republic may take away the crown from him, if he tranſgreſs the laws of the State.

THE nobility, jealous of their liberty, often ſell their votes, but ſeldom their affections. Scarcely have they elected a King, but, fearing his ambition, they oppoſe him by their cabals. The grandees whom he has made, and whom he cannot unmake, often become his enemies, inſtead of remaining his creatures. Thoſe, who are attached to the court, are objects of hatred to the reſt of the nobility; this always forms two parties; an unavoidable diviſion, and even neceſſary in thoſe countries, where they will chuſe at the ſame time to have Kings, and to preſerve their liberties.

WHATEVER concerns the nation is regulated in the States-General, which they call Diets. Theſe States are compoſed of the body of the Senate, and of ſeveral gentlemen. The Senators are the Palatines and the Biſhops: the ſecond order is compoſed of the Deputies of the particular Diets of each Palatinate. At theſe great aſſemblies, the Archbiſhop of Gneſna, Primate of Poland, and Viceroy of the Kingdom during the interregnum, preſides, and

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is the firſt man of the State, next to the King. There is ſeldom any other Cardinal in Poland but he; becauſe the Roman purple giving no precedence in the Senate, a Biſhop, who ſhall be a Cardinal, will be obliged either to take his rank as a Senator, or renounce the ſolid rights of the dignity of his own country, to ſupport the pretenſions of a foreign honour.

THESE Diets, by the laws of the Kingdom, ought to be held alternately in Poland and Livonia. The Deputies often decide their buſineſs ſword in hand, in the ſame manner as the ancient Sarmatians from whom they are deſcended, and ſometimes even in liquor, a vice of which the Sarmatians were ignorant. Every gentlemen deputed to the States-General enjoys the ſame right, which the Tribune of the people at Rome had, of oppoſing the laws of the Senate. Any one gentleman, who ſays "I proteſt," ſtops by that ſingle word the unanimous reſolutions of all the reſt; and if he leave the place where the Diet is held, the aſſembly is diſſolved.

THEY apply to the diſorders, which ariſe from this law, a remedy more dangerous than the diſeaſe. Poland is ſeldom without two factions: unanimity in their Diets, therefore, being impoſſible, each party forms Confederacies, in which they decide by the plurality of voices, without paying any regard to the proteſts of the minority. Theſe aſſemblies, not warranted

ranted by law, but authorized by cuſtom, are held in the name of the King, though often without his conſent, and againſt his intereſt; ſomething in the manner in which the League in France made uſe of the name of Henry III. to ruin him; and as the Parliament of England, which brought Charles I. to the block, began by placing that Prince's name to all the reſolutions, which they took to deſtroy him. When the commotions are finiſhed, it is the part of the General Diets to confirm or quaſh the acts of theſe Confederacies. A Diet can even alter every thing that has been done at preceding ones; for the ſame reaſon that in monarchical countries, a King can aboliſh the laws of his predeceſſor, and even his own.

THE nobility, who make the laws of the Republic, conſtitute its ſtrength alſo. They appear on horſeback upon any great occaſion, and are able to form a body of above a hundred thouſand men. This great army, called *the Poſpolite*, moves with difficulty, and is ill-governed: the difficulty of obtaining proviſion and forage makes it impoſſible for it to continue long aſſembled: it has neither diſcipline, ſubordination, nor experience; but the love of liberty, which animates it, renders it always formidable.

THESE nobles may be conquered, or diſperſed, or even held in ſlavery for a time, but they ſoon ſhake off the yoke; indeed they compare themſelves to the reed, which the wind bends to the ground, but which

which riſes again as ſoon as the wind ceaſes to blow. It is for this reaſon that they have no places of ſtrength: they will have themſelves to be the only bulwark of the Republic; nor will they ſuffer their King to build any forts, for fear he ſhould make uſe of them more to oppreſs than to defend them. Their country is of courſe entirely open, except two or three frontier towns. if in a war, either civil or foreign, they reſolve to ſuſtain a ſiege, they are obliged to raiſe fortifications of earth, repair the old walls that are half ruined, and enlarge their ditches that are almoſt filled up, ſo that the town is generally taken before the intrenchments are completed.

THE *Poſpolite* are not always on horſeback to defend the country; they never mount but by the order of the Diets, though ſometimes, in extreme dangers, by the ſimple order of the King.

THE ordinary guard of Poland is an army, which ought always to be maintained at the expence of the Republic. It is compoſed of two corps, under the command of two different commanders in chief. The firſt corps is that of Poland, and ought to conſiſt of thirty-ſix thouſand men: the ſecond, to the number of twelve thouſand, is that of Lithuania. The two Generals are independent the one of the other; and though they are nominated by the King, they are accountable to nobody for their actions but the Republic, and have an unlimited authority

thority over their troops. The Colonels are abſolute maſters of their regiments; and it belongs to them to maintain and pay the ſoldiery as they are able; but being ſeldom paid themſelves, they ravage the country, and ruin the peaſants, to ſatisfy their own avidity, and that of their ſoldiers. The Poliſh lords appear in theſe armies with more magnificence than they do in the towns; and their tents are more ornamented than their houſes. The cavalry, which makes up two-thirds of the army, is compoſed of gentlemen; and is remarkable for the beauty of their horſes, and the richneſs of their harneſs and accoutrements.

THE gendarmes in particular, whom they diſtinguiſh into Huſſars and Pancernes, never march without being accompanied by ſeveral valets, who hold their horſes, which are adorned with plates and nails of ſilver, embroidered ſaddles, ſaddle-bows and gilt ſtirrups, and ſometimes of maſſy ſilver, together with large houſings trailing after the manner of the Turks, the magnificence of whom the Poles imitate as much as poſſible.

IN the ſame degree that the cavalry is fine and ſuperb, the infantry was then proportionably wretched, ill-clothed, unarmed, without regimentals, or any thing uniform. It was ſo at leaſt till about the year 1710. Theſe infantry, who reſemble wandering Tartars, ſupported with an aſtoniſhing fortitude hunger, cold, fatigue, and all the hardſhips of war.

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ONE may ſee in the Poliſh ſoldiers the character of the ancient Sarmatians their anceſtors, the ſame want of diſcipline, the ſame fury to attack, the ſame readineſs to fly from, and to return to the attack, and likewiſe the ſame diſpoſition to ſlaughter when they are conquerors.

THE King of Poland flattered himſelf at firſt, that in caſe of neceſſity theſe two armies would fight in his favour; that the Poliſh Poſpolite would arm themſelves at his orders; and that all theſe forces, joined to the Saxons his ſubjects, and to the Muſcovites his allies, would form a multitude, before which, the ſmall number of the Swedes would not dare to appear. But he ſaw himſelf almoſt at once deprived of theſe ſuccours, by means of that very eagerneſs which he had ſhewn to have them all at once.

ACCUSTOMED in his hereditary dominions to abſolute power, he imagined too fondly that he might govern in Poland as he did in Saxony. The beginning of his reign made malcontents; and his firſt proceedings irritated the party, who had oppoſed his election, and alienated almoſt all the reſt. The Poles murmured to ſee their towns filled with Saxon garriſons, and their frontiers lined with troops. This nation, much more jealous of maintaining its liberty, than anxious to attack its neighbours, did not regard the war of King Auguſtus againſt the Swedes, and the irruption into Livonia, as an enterprize advantageous

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to the Republic. It is difficult to deceive a free people reſpecting its true intereſt. The Poles knew, that if this war, undertaken without their conſent, ſhould prove unſucceſsful, their country, open on every ſide, would become a prey to the King of Sweden; and that if it were ſucceſsful, they would be enſlaved by their own King; who, being then maſter of Livonia and Saxony, would ſhut up Poland between theſe two States. In this alternative, either to be ſlaves of the King, whom they had elected, or to be ravaged by Charles XII. who was juſtly incenſed, they raiſed but one cry againſt the war, which they believed to have been declared more againſt themſelves than Sweden. They regarded the Saxons and the Muſcovites as the forgers of their chains; and ſeeing ſoon after that the King of Sweden had overcome every thing which oppoſed his paſſage, and was advancing with a victorious army into the very heart of Lithuania, they exclaimed againſt their Sovereign with ſo much the more freedom, as he was unfortunate.

Two parties at this time divided Lithuania; that of the Princes Sapieha, and that of Oginſky. Theſe two factions began from private quarrels, and at laſt terminated in a civil war. The King of Sweden attached himſelf to the Princes Sapieha; and Oginſky, ill ſupported by the Saxons, found his party almoſt annihilated. The Lithuanian army, whom theſe troubles, and the want of money, had reduced

to a ſmall number, was partly diſperſed by the conquerors. The few, who held out for the King of Poland, were ſeparated into ſmall bodies of fugitive troops, who wandered about the country, and ſubſiſted by rapine. Auguſtus ſaw nothing in Lithuania but the weakneſs of his own party, the hatred of his ſubjects, and an hoſtile army conducted by a young King, enraged, victorious, and implacable.

THERE was indeed an army in Poland, but inſtead of its being compoſed of thirty-ſix thouſand men, the number preſcribed by law, there were not even eighteen thouſand; not only ill-paid, and ill-armed, but their Generals knew not as yet, which ſide they ſhould take.

THE only reſource of the King was, to order his nobility to follow him: but he was afraid of expoſing himſelf to a refuſal, which would have diſcovered his weakneſs, and conſequently have augmented it.

IT was in this ſtate of trouble and uncertainty that all the palatinates demanded a Diet of the King, in the ſame manner as in England, when all the bodies of the ſtate, in difficult times, preſent addreſſes to the King, beſeeching him to convoke a Parliament. Auguſtus had more need of an army than a Diet, in which the actions of the King are ſtrictly ſcrutinized. However, it was neceſſary that he ſhould aſſemble one, leſt he ſhould incenſe the nation beyond reconciliation; it

it was accordingly appointed to be held at Warſaw the ſecond of December, in the year 1701. He ſoon perceived, however, that Charles had at leaſt as much power as himſelf in this aſſembly. Thoſe, who favoured the Sapiehas, the Lubomirſky, and their friends, the Palatine Leczinſky, Treaſurer of the Crown (who owed his fortune to King Auguſtus), and eſpecially the partizans of the Princes Sobieſky, were all ſecretly attached to the King of Sweden.

THE moſt conſiderable of theſe partizans, and the moſt dangerous enemy that the King of Poland had, was the Cardinal Radziejouſky, Archbiſhop of Gneſna, Primate of the kingdom, and Preſident of the Diet. He was a man full of artifice and myſtery in his conduct, entirely governed by an ambitious woman, whom the Swedes called *Madame Cardinal*, and who never ceaſed engaging him in intrigue and faction. The talent of the Primate conſiſted, as we are told, in making uſe of circumſtances, without ſeeking to give birth to them. He appeared often to be irreſolute, for who is not ſo in a civil war? King John Sobieſky, the predeceſſor of Auguſtus, had firſt made him Biſhop of Warmia, and Vice-chancellor of the kingdom, Radziejouſky, being yet but a Biſhop, had obtained the Cardinalſhip by the favour of the ſame King. This dignity ſoon opened his way to that of Primate: thus uniting in his own perſon every thing to impoſe upon mankind he was in a ſtate to undertake any thing with impunity.

HE

He tried his credit, after the death of John, to place the Prince James Sobieſky on the throne; but the torrent of hatred, which the father had incurred, though a truly great man, overwhelmed his ſon. After this, the Cardinal Primate joined the Abbè de Polignac, Ambaſſador of France, to give the crown to the Prince of Conti, who was in effect elected. But money and Saxon troops triumphed over his negociations. He ſuffered himſelf at laſt to be drawn over to the party that crowned the Elector of Saxony, and waited with patience for an opportunity of making a diviſion between the nation and this new King.

The victories of Charles XII. protector of Prince James Sobieſky, the civil war in Lithuania, and the general alienation of men's minds from King Auguſtus, made the Cardinal Primate believe that the time was arrived when he might ſend Auguſtus into Saxony, and open King John's ſon the way to the throne. This prince, formerly the innocent object of the hatred of the Poles, had begun to engage their affections from the time of their hatred to King Auguſtus, but he durſt not as yet conceive an idea of ſo great a revolution, of which the Cardinal was inſenſibly laying the foundation.

At firſt he ſeemed to wiſh to reconcile the King, and the Republic; he ſent circular letters dictated, in appearance, by the ſpirit of concord and charity; common and well-known ſnares, but with which men are always

always caught. He wrote an affecting letter to the King of Sweden, conjuring him, in the name of Him, whom all Chriſtians equally adored, to give peace to Poland and her King. Charles XII. anſwered the intentions of the Cardinal rather than his words. In the mean time he remained in the Great Duchy of Lithuania with his victorious army, declaring that he would not diſturb the Diet; that he made war againſt Auguſtus and the Saxons, and not againſt the Poles; and that ſo far from attacking the Republic, he came to relieve it from oppreſſion. Theſe letters and theſe anſwers were intended for the public. The emiſſaries that were continually going and coming between the Cardinal and Count Piper, and the ſecret aſſemblies at the prelate's houſe, were the ſprings that regulated the motions of the Diet: they propoſed to ſend an Ambaſſador to Charles XII. and unanimouſly demanded of the King, that he would call no more Muſcovites to his frontiers, and that he ſhould alſo ſend back his Saxon troops.

THE bad fortune of Auguſtus had already done what the Diet required of him. The league ſecretly concluded at Birzen with the Muſcovites, was now become as uſeleſs, as it had at firſt appeared formidable. He was far from being able to ſend to the Czar the fifty thouſand Germans he had promiſed to raiſe in the Empire. Even the Czar, a dangerous neighbour of Poland, was in no haſte to aſſiſt with all his force a divided kingdom, from whoſe misfortunes he hoped to reap ſome advantage. He contented himſelf with ſending twenty

twenty thouſand Muſcovites into Lithuania, who did more miſchief than the Swedes, flying every where before the conqueror, and ravaging the lands of the Poles, till at laſt, being purſued by the Swediſh Generals, and finding nothing more to pillage, they returned in bodies to their own country. With regard to the ſhattered remains of the Saxon armies beaten at Riga, Auguſtus ſent them to winter and recruit in Saxony, to the end that this ſacrifice, involuntary as it was, might regain him the affections of the irritated Poles.

THE war was now turning into intrigues. The Diet was divided into almoſt as many factions as there were Palatines. One day the intereſts of King Auguſtus prevailed, the next they were proſcribed. Every one cried out for liberty and juſtice; but no one knew what it was either to be free or juſt. The time was loſt by caballing in private, and haranguing in public. The Diet knew neither what they wanted, nor what they ought to do. Great aſſemblies have hardly ever taken right counſel in civil broils; becauſe the moſt courageous amongſt them are engaged in the ſedition, and the well-diſpoſed are generally a prey to their fears. The Diet diſſolved in tumult the 17th of February, in the year 1702, after three months of cabals aud irreſolution. The Senators, who are the Palatines and Biſhops, remained at Warſaw. The Senate of Poland has a right to make laws proviſionally, which the Diets ſeldom diſannul. This body being leſs

leſs numerous, and accuſtomed to buſineſs, was far leſs tumultuous, and decided with greater diſpatch.

THEY decreed, that they ſhould ſend to the king of Sweden the embaſſy propoſed in the Diet; that the Poſpolite ſhould mount their horſes, and hold themſelves in readineſs at all events: they made ſeveral regulations to appeaſe the troubles in Lithuania, and ſtill more to leſſen the authority of their King, which was more to be feared than that of Charles.

AUGUSTUS choſe rather at that time to receive hard laws from his conqueror than from his ſubjects. He determined to ſue for a peace to the King of Sweden, and wanted to make a ſecret treaty with him. It was neceſſary to conceal this ſtep from the Senate, whom he regarded as an enemy ſtill more untractable than Charles. This was a delicate affair; he entruſted it to the counteſs of Konigſmark, a Swediſh lady of high birth, and to whom he was at that time attached. This lady, celebrated in the world for her wit and beauty, was more capable than any miniſter to bring a negociation to a happy concluſion. Moreover, as ſhe had an eſtate in the dominions of Charles XII. and had lived a long time in his court, ſhe had a plauſible pretext to ſeek this Prince. She therefore went to the Swediſh camp in Lithuania, and addreſſed herſelf directly to Count Piper, who too haſtily promiſed her an audience with his maſter. The Counteſs, among thoſe perfections, which rendered her one of the moſt amiable perſons

perſons in Europe, had the ſingular talent of ſpeaking the languages of ſeveral countries, which ſhe had never ſeen, with as much elegance as if ſhe had been born there; ſhe even amuſed herſelf ſometimes in writing French verſes, which might have been miſtaken for the production of a perſon born at Verſailles. Thoſe ſhe compoſed for Charles XII. hiſtory ought not to omit. She introduced the heathen gods praiſing the different virtues of Charles. The piece concluded thus:

Enfin chacun des Dieux diſcourant à ſa gloire,
Le placoit par avance au Temple de Memoire;
Mais Venus ni Bacchus n'en dirent pas un mot.

Nay, all the Gods, to found his fame combine,
Except the Deities of love and wine.

All her wit and beauty were, however, thrown away upon a man like the King of Sweden, who conſtantly refuſed to ſee her. She therefore reſolved to throw herſelf in his way as he rode out to take the air, which he frequently did. She one day met him in a narrow path: ſhe deſcended from her carriage as ſoon as ſhe perceived him; the King made her a low bow, turned his horſe about, and rode back in an inſtant; ſo that the only advantage, which the Counteſs of Konigſmark gained from her journey, was the ſatisfaction of believing that the King of Sweden feared nobody but her.

The

THE King of Poland was now obliged to throw himſelf into the arms of the Senate. He therefore made them two propoſals, by the Palatine of Marienburgh; the one, that they ſhould leave to him the diſpoſition of the army of the Republic, to whom he would pay, out of his own revenue, two quarters advance; the other, that they ſhould permit him to bring back twelve thouſand Saxons into Poland. The Cardinal Primate returned him an anſwer as ſevere as the refuſal of the King of Sweden. He told the Palatine of Marienburgh, in the name of the aſſembly, "that they "had reſolved to ſend an embaſſy to Charles XII. and "that he would not adviſe him to bring back any "Saxons."

THE King, in this extremity, wiſhed to preſerve the appearance, at leaſt, of royal authority. He ſent one of his chamberlains, on his own part, to wait upon Charles, to know from him, where and how his Swediſh Majeſty would be pleaſed to receive the embaſſy of his Maſter and the Republic. Unluckily they had forgotten to aſk a paſſport from the Swedes for this chamberlain; the King of Sweden, therefore, inſtead of giving him audience, cauſed him to be thrown into priſon, ſaying, "that he expected an embaſſy from "the Republic, and not from Auguſtus." This violation of the right of nations, no law, but that of a ſuperior force, could excuſe.

AFTERWARDS Charles, having left behind him garriſons in ſeveral towns in Lithuania, advanced beyond Grodno, a town well known in Europe for the Diets that are held there, but ill built, and badly fortified.

A FEW miles on the other ſide Grodno, he encountered the embaſſy of the Republic: it was compoſed of five Senators. They deſired in the firſt place to regulate the ceremony of their introduction, a thing the King was unacquainted with: they then demanded that the Republic ſhould be ſtiled "moſt ſerene," and that the coaches of the King and the Senators ſhould be ſent to meet them. They were anſwered, that the Republic ſhould be ſtiled "illuſtrious," and not "moſt ſerene," and that the King never made uſe of carriages; that he had many Officers about him, but no Senators; that a Lieutenant general ſhould be ſent to meet them, and that they ſhould come on their own horſes.

CHARLES XII. received them in his tent, with ſome appearance of military pomp; their diſcourſe was full of caution and reſerve. It was remarked, that they were afraid of Charles, that they did not love Auguſtus, but that they were aſhamed to take, by command of a ſtranger, the crown from a King, whom they had elected. Nothing was concluded, and Charles gave them to underſtand, that he would ſettle all diſputes at Warſaw.

HIS march was preceded by a manifeſto, which the Cardinal and his party ſpread over Poland in eight days.

days. Charles, by this writing, invited all the Poles to join their vengeance to his, and pretended to ſhew them, that his intereſt and theirs were the ſame. They were, however, very different; but, the manifeſto, ſupported by a great party, by the confuſion of the Senate, and the approach of the conqueror, made a very ſtrong impreſſion. They were obliged to own Charles for Protector, becauſe he would be ſo, and becauſe it was happy for them that he contented himſelf with this title.

THE Senators, who oppoſed Auguſtus, publiſhed this manifeſto aloud, even in his preſence; the few, who were attached to him, obſerved a profound ſilence. At laſt, when they were apprized that Charles was advancing by long marches, they all prepared in the greateſt confuſion to depart. The Cardinal quitted Warſaw among the firſt; the greateſt part fled with precipitation; ſome retired to their eſtates to wait the end of this affair, while others went to arm their friends, Nobody remained with the King except the Ambaſſadors of the Emperor, and of the Czar, the Pope's Nuncio, together with a few Biſhops and Palatines attached to his fortunes. He was obliged to fly, as there was nothing as yet decided in his favour. He haſtened, before his departure, to hold a council with the ſmall number of Senators, who ſtill repreſented the Senate. But however zealous they were to ſerve him, they were nevertheleſs Poles; and had all conceived ſo great an averſion to Saxon troops, that they did not dare to grant him the liberty of recalling more than

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ſix thouſand men for his defence and even voted that thoſe ſhould be commanded by the Grand General of Poland, and ſent back as ſoon as they had made peace. The armies of the Republic, indeed, they committed to his care.

AFTER this reſolution the King quitted Warſaw, too weak to reſiſt his enemies, and little ſatisfied even with his own party. He immediately publiſhed orders for aſſembling the Poſpolite and the armies, which were little more than empty names. He had nothing to hope for in Lithuania, where the Swedes then were. The army of Poland, reduced to a few troops, wanted arms, proviſions, and inclination to fight. The greateſt part of the nobility, intimidated, irreſolute, and diſaffected, remained at their different eſtates. In vain did the King, authorized by the laws of the land, order, on pain of death, that every gentleman ſhould mount his horſe and follow him; it was become a problematical point whether they ought to obey him or not. His great reſource was in the troops of the Electorate, where the form of government being entirely abſolute, did not leave him a doubt of their obedience. He had already ſecretly commanded twelve thouſand Saxons to advance with precipitation. He likewiſe recalled the eight thouſand men he had promiſed the Emperor in his war againſt France, and whom the neceſſity into which he was reduced obliged him to withdraw. To introduce ſo many Saxons into Poland, was to exaſperate all minds, and violate the law made by his own party, who allowed him only ſix thouſand;

but

but he knew very well, that, if he were conqueror they would not dare to complain, and, if he were conquered they would not forgive his having introduced even the ſix thouſand. At the time theſe ſoldiers were arriving in troops, and as he was going from one Palatinate to another to aſſemble the nobility, who were attached to him, the King of Sweden appeared before Warſaw on the fifth of May 1702. At the firſt ſummons, the gates were opened to him. He diſmiſſed the Poliſh garriſon, diſbanded the city guard, eſtabliſhed poſts in every part of the town, and ordered the inhabitants to come and deliver to him their arms; but, content with diſarming them, and being unwilling to irritate them, he demanded a contribution of no more than one hundred thouſand livres.

AUGUSTUS was at this time aſſembling his forces at Cracow, and was very much ſurprized to ſee the Cardinal arrive there. This man pretended to keep up the decency of his character to the very laſt, and endeavoured to dethrone the King with the exterior behaviour of a good ſubject; he gave him to underſtand that the King of Sweden appeared diſpoſed to liſten to a reaſonable accommodation, and humbly aſked permiſſion to ſeek him. The King granted him what he was not able to refuſe, that is to ſay, the liberty of doing him miſchief.

THE Cardinal Primate haſtened immediately to find the King of Sweden, before whom he had not as yet dared

dared to preſent himſelf. He ſaw this Prince at Praga, near Warſaw, but without the ceremonies with which he had received the Ambaſſadors of the Republic. He found this conqueror dreſſed in a coat of coarſe blue cloth with gilt braſs buttons, large boots, and buff-ſkin gloves, which came up to his elbows, in a chamber without tapeſtry, in which were his brother-in-law, the Duke of Holſtein, Count Piper his firſt miniſter, and ſeveral General Officers. The King advanced ſeveral paces to meet the Cardinal; and they had a conference together, ſtanding, of a quarter of an hour, which Charles finiſhed by ſaying aloud, "I will not "give peace to the Poles till they have elected ano-"ther King." The Cardinal, who expected ſuch a declaration, cauſed it to be immediately known to all the Palatines, aſſuring them of the extreme ſorrow he felt at it, and repreſenting, at the ſame time, the neceſſity there was to obey the conqueror.

AT this news the King of Poland plainly perceived that he muſt either loſe the throne, or preſerve it by a battle. He exhauſted all his reſources for this great deciſion. All his Saxon troops were arrived from the Saxon frontiers, and the nobility of the Palatinate of Cracow, where he ſtill was, came in crowds to offer him their ſervices. He exhorted each of theſe gentlemen to remember their oaths, and they promiſed to ſhed the laſt drop of their blood to ſupport him. Encouraged by their ſupport, and by the troops, who bore the name of the army of the Crown, he went for

for the firſt time to ſeek, in perſon, the King of Sweden, whom he preſently found advancing towards Cracow.

THE two Kings met on the 18th of July, in the year 1702, in a vaſt plain near Cliſſau, between Warſaw and Cracow. Auguſtus had near twenty-four thouſand men, while Charles had no more than twelve thouſand. The battle began by diſcharges of artillery. At the firſt volley from the Saxons the Duke of Holſtein, who commanded the Swediſh cavalry, a young Prince of courage and virtue, received a cannon-ball in his reins The King aſked if he were killed, and was told yes: he made no anſwer; ſome tears fell from his eyes; and he held his hand up to his face for a moment; when, all of a ſudden, he ſpurred his horſe with all his might, and ruſhed into the midſt of the enemy at the head of his guards.

THE King of Poland did every thing that could be expected from a Prince, who fought for his crown. He led his troops himſelf three times to the charge; but he had only the Saxons to fight with him; for the Poles, who formed his right wing, all fled at the commencement of the battle, ſome through fear, and others through diſaffection. The good fortune of Charles carried all before it; and gained him a complete victory. He took poſſeſſion of the enemy's camp, their colours and artillery, and of Auguſtus's military cheſt. He did not ſtop in the field of battle, but marched

ched directly to Cracow, purſuing the King of Poland, who fled before him.

THE citizens of Cracow were hardy enough to ſhut their gates againſt the conqueror. He cauſed them to be broken open, and the garriſon did not dare to fire a ſingle gun, but were driven with whips and canes into the caſtle, were the King entered with them. One Officer of Artillery only having courage to prepare himſelf to put the match to a cannon, Charles threw himſelf upon him, and tore it out of his hand. The commander threw himſelf on his knees before the King. Three Swediſh regiments were quartered at diſcretion among the citizens, and the town taxed with a contribution of an hundred thouſand rix-dollars. The Count de Steinbock, who was made governor of the town, having been told that there were ſome treaſures hid in the tombs of the Kings of Poland, which are in the church of St. Nicholas at Cracow, had them opened, but found nothing except ſome ornaments of gold and ſilver, which belonged to the church, of which, however, he took a part; and Charles even ſent a gold cup to one of the Swediſh churches, which would have raiſed the Poliſh catholics againſt him, could any thing have prevailed againſt the terror of his arms.

HE departed from Cracow with a fixed reſolution to purſue the King of Poland without ceaſing: but a few miles from the town his horſe fell, and he broke his

his thigh-bone. He was obliged to be carried back to Cracow, where he was confined to his bed for ſix weeks, in the hand of his ſurgeons. This accident gave Auguſtus a little reſpite. He immediately cauſed it to be reported throughout Poland and Germany, that Charles XII. was killed by this fall. This falſe report, believed for ſome time, threw every mind into aſtoniſhment and apprehenſion. In this ſhort interval he aſſembled at Marienburgh, and then at Lublin, all the Orders of the kingdom, before convoked at Sendomir. This aſſembly was very numerous, few of the Palatinates refuſing to ſend their deputies thither. He regained almoſt every heart by preſents and promiſes, and that affability ſo neceſſary to abſolute Kings to make themſelves beloved, and to elected Kings to enable them to maintain their throne. The Diet was ſoon undeceived with regard to the falſe report of the death of the King of Sweden; but motion having been given to this great body, it ſuffered itſelf to be carried along by the impulſe it had received, all the members ſwearing to continue faithful to their ſovereign; ſo much are great aſſemblies given to change. The Cardinal Primate himſelf, affecting ſtill to be attached to Auguſtus, came to the Diet of Lublin, where he kiſſed the King's hand, and did not refuſe to take the oath with the reſt. The oath was, that they had never attempted, nor ever would attempt, any thing againſt Auguſtus. The King excuſed the Cardinal from the firſt part of the oath, and the prelate bluſhed when he ſwore to the laſt.

The reſult of this Diet was, that the Republic of Poland ſhould maintain an army of fifty thouſand men, at their own expence, for the uſe of their ſovereign: that they ſhould give ſix weeks to the Swedes to declare either for peace or war; and the ſame time to the Princes Sapieha, the firſt authors of the troubles in Lithuania, to come and aſk pardon of the King of Poland.

But, during theſe deliberations, Charles recovered of his wound, and overturned every thing before him. Always firm in the deſign of forcing the Poles to dethrone their King with their own hands, he cauſed a new aſſembly to be convoked at Warſaw, through the intrigues of the Cardinal Primate, to oppoſe that of Lublin. His Generals repreſented to him, that this affair might be attended with endleſs delays, and prove ineffectual at laſt; that, in the mean time, the Muſcovites were improving in military ſcience every day, in preſence of the troops he had left in Livonia and Ingria; that the ſkirmiſhes, which often happened in thoſe provinces between the Swedes and the Ruſſians, were not always attended with advantages to the former; and laſtly, that his preſence there might very ſoon be neceſſary. Charles, as unſhaken in his projects as impatient in his actions, replied, "Should I "be obliged to ſtay here fifty years, I will not depart "till I have dethroned the King of Poland."

He

He left the aſſembly of Warſaw to combat by their orations and writings that of Lublin, and to ſeek to juſtify their proceedings by the laws of the kingdom; laws always equivocal, which each party interprets to his own intereſt, and which ſucceſs alone renders inconteſtible. As for himſelf, having increaſed his victorious troops with ſix thouſand horſe and eight thouſand foot, which he had received from Sweden, he marched againſt the remainder of the Saxon army, which he had beaten at Cliſſau, and which had had time to rally and recruit, while his fall from his horſe had confined him to his bed. This army ſhunned his approach, and retired towards Pruſſia, to the north weſt of Warſaw. The river Bug was between him and his enemies. Charles ſwam acroſs it at the head of his cavalry, whilſt the infantry ſought a ford ſomewhat higher. They came up with the Saxons the firſt of May 1703, at a place called Pulteſk. General Stenau commanded them, to the number of about ten thouſand. The King of Sweden, in his precipitate march had no more than the ſame number, certain that a leſs number would ſuffice. The terror of his arms was ſo great, that one half of the Saxon troops fled at his approach, without giving him battle. General Stenau ſtood, indeed, for a moment, with two regiments; but preſently after was obliged to join in the general flight of his army, which was diſperſed before it was conquered. The Swedes did not take more than a thou-

a thouſand priſoners, nor kill more than ſix hundred; having more difficulty to purſue than to defeat them.

AUGUSTUS having nothing but the remains of his Saxons, who were beaten on every ſide, retired in haſte to Thorn, an ancient town of Royal Pruſſia, ſituated on the Viſtula, and under the protection of the Poles. Charles immediately prepared to beſiege it; and the King of Poland, who did not think himſelf ſecure, retired, and flew into every corner of Poland where he could poſſibly aſſemble any ſoldiers, and into which the Swedes had not penetrated. In the mean time, Charles, amidſt ſo many rapid marches, ſwimming acroſs rivers, and hurried along with his infantry mounted behind his cavalry, had not been able to bring up his cannon before Thorn, and was obliged to wait till it came from Sweden by ſea.

WHILE he was poſted here, a few miles from the town, he would often advance too nigh the ramparts, for the purpoſe of reconnoitring the enemy. The plain dreſs which he always wore, was, in theſe dangerous excurſions, of more utility than he was aware of; as it prevented his being remarked and ſingled out by his enemies, who would have fired upon his perſon. One day, having advanced too near, with one of his Generals,* named Lieven, who was dreſſed in a blue coat trimmed with gold, and being afraid that the General would be too eaſily diſtinguiſhed, he ordered

* *In the firſt editions it was ſaid that this General was in ſcarlet, but the Chaplain Norberg has ſo well proved that his uniform was blue, that we have corrected this error.*

him

him to walk behind him; prompted to it by that magnanimity, which was ſo natural to him, and which prevented him from reflecting, that he expoſed his own life to imminent danger to ſave that of his ſubject. Lieven ſaw, too late, his error in putting on a remarkable dreſs, which endangered all thoſe, who were near him; and, fearing equally for the King in any place whatever, heſitated whether he ſhould obey: in the midſt of this conteſt, the King took him by the arm, and placing himſelf before him, entirely ſcreened him; but at this inſtant, a volley of cannon, which came in flank, ſtruck the General dead, on the ſpot which the King had ſcarcely quitted. The death of this man, killed exactly in his ſtead, and becauſe he had endeavoured to ſave him, contributed not a little to confirm him in the opinion, which he entertained throughtout his life, of an abſolute predeſtination; and made him believe, that his fate, which had preſerved him in ſo ſingular a manner, had reſerved him for the execution of yet greater things.

EVERY thing ſucceeded with him: his negociations and his arms were equally happy. He was preſent, as it were, in every part of Poland; for his Grand-Mareſchal Renſchild was in the heart of the kingdom with a large body of troops; about thirty thouſand Swedes, under different Generals, ſpread to the north and eaſt over the frontiers of Muſcovy, withſtood the efforts of the whole Ruſſian Empire; and Charles himſelf was in the weſt, at the other end of Poland, at the head of his choiceſt troops.

THE

THE King of Denmark, tied up by the treaty of Travendal, which his weakneſs had prevented him from breaking, remained ſilent. This Monarch, always prudent, did not dare to diſcover his diſguſt at ſeeing the King of Sweden ſo near his dominions. At a greater diſtance towards the ſouth-weſt lay the Duchy of Bremen, between the rivers Elbe and Weſer, the moſt remote territory of the ancient Swediſh conqueſts, filled with ſtrong garriſons, and opening to the conqueror a free paſſage into Saxony and the Empire. Thus, from the German ocean almoſt to the mouth of the Boriſthenes, comprehending the whole breadth of Europe, and even to the gates of Moſcow, all was in conſternation, and on the point of a general revolution. His ſhips, maſters of the Baltick ſea, were employed to tranſport into Sweden the priſoners he had made in Poland. Sweden, tranquil in the midſt of theſe great commotions, enjoyed a profound peace, and ſhared in the glory of its King, without bearing the burdens of war, as the victorious troops were paid and maintained at the expence of the conquered.

IN this general ſilence of the North before the arms of Charles XII. the town of Dantzick dared to diſpleaſe him. Fourteen frigates and forty tranſports were bringing the King a reinforcement of ſix thouſand men, with cannon and ammunition, to begin the ſiege of Thorn. It was neceſſary for theſe ſuccours to paſs the Viſtula. At the mouth of this river is Dantzick,

zick, a free and wealthy town, which enjoys, with Thorn and Elbing, the ſame privileges in Poland that the Imperial towns poſſeſs in Germany. Its liberty has been alternately attacked by the Danes, the Swedes, and ſeveral Princes of Germany, and nothing has preſerved it but the mutual jealouſy of thoſe Powers. Count Steinbock, one of the Swediſh Generals, aſſembled the Magiſtrates in the King's name, and demanded paſſage for the troops and ammunition. The Magiſttrates, with an imprudence common to thoſe, who treat with a ſuperior power, were afraid either to refuſe, or abſolutely to grant his requeſt. The General, however, obliged them to grant him more than he had at firſt demanded; and even laid the town under a contribution of a hundred thouſand crowns, by which means he made them pay for their imprudent heſitation. At laſt the reinforcement, cannon, and ammunition, having arrived before Thorn, they began the ſiege the 22d of September.

ROBEL, governor of this place, defended it for a month with a garriſon of five thouſand men; at the end of which time he was obliged to ſurrender at diſcretion. The garriſon was made priſoners of war, and ſent into Sweden. Robel was preſented to the King diſarmed. That Prince, who never loſt an opportunity of honouring merit in his enemies, gave him a ſword with his own hand, made him a conſiderable preſent in money, and diſmiſſed him on his parole.

The

The honour, which the town of Thorn derived from having formerly given birth to Copernicus, the founder of the true ſyſtem of the globe, was of no ſervice to it with a conqueror, too little acquainted with theſe ſubjects, and who had not yet learned to reward any thing but valour. But this poor and paltry town was condemned to pay forty thouſand crowns; an exceſſive contribution for ſuch a place.

ELBING, built on an arm of the Viſtula, founded by the Teutonic Knights, and annexed likewiſe to Poland, did not profit by the fault of the Dantzickers, but heſitated too long about giving paſſage to the Swediſh troops. It was ſtill more ſeverely puniſhed than Dantzick. Charles entered Elbing the 13th of December, at the head of four thouſand men, with bayonets fixed to the ends of their fuſees. The inhabitants, ſtruck with terror, threw themſelves on their knees in the ſtreets, and begged for mercy. He had them all diſarmed, quartered his ſoldiers upon the citizens, and then, having ſent for the Magiſtracy, he exacted, that very day, a contribution of two hundred and ſixty thouſand crowns. There were in the town two hundred pieces of cannon, and four hundred thouſand weight of powder, which he ſeized. A battle gained could not have procured him ſo many advantages.

ALL theſe ſucceſſes were the forerunners to the dethroning the King of Poland.

SCARCELY

SCARCELY had the Cardinal ſworn to his King, that he would attempt nothing againſt him, when he repaired to the aſſembly at Warſaw, always under the pretext of peace. He arrived, ſpeaking of nothing but of concord and obedience, though he was accompanied by a number of ſoldiers, whom he had raiſed on his own eſtate. At laſt he threw off the maſk, and on the 14th of February 1704, in the name of the aſſembly, declared "Auguſtus, Elector of Saxony, incapable of "wearing the crown of Poland." They all pronounced, with one voice, the throne to be vacant. The will of the King of Sweden, and conſequently that of the Diet, was to give to Prince James Sobieſky the throne of the King his father, King John. James Sobieſky was, at this time, at Breſlaw in Sileſia, waiting with impatience for the crown which his father had worn. He was one day hunting, with Prince Conſtantine, one of his brothers, a few miles from Breſlaw, when thirty Saxon horſemen, ſecretly ſent by King Auguſtus, ruſhing ſuddenly out of a neighbouring wood, ſurrounded the two Princes, and carried them off without reſiſtance. Freſh horſes had been prepared, on which they were conducted to Leipſick, and there cloſely confined. This ſtroke deranged the meaſures of Charles, the Cardinal, and the whole Aſſembly of Warſaw.

FORTUNE, which ſports with crowned heads, placed, almoſt at the ſame inſtant, Auguſtus, in danger of being nearly taken himſelf. He was at table, three leagues

from Cracow, relying upon an advanced guard, poſted at ſome diſtance, when General Renſchild appeared, after having carried off this guard. The King of Poland had but juſt time to mount his horſe, with ten others. General Renſchild purſued him for three days, on the point of ſeizing him every moment. The king fled as far as Sendomir, the Swediſh General ſtill purſuing him; and it was only by ſingular good fortune that this Prince eſcaped.

DURING all this time Auguſtus's party, and that of the Cardinal, treated each other as traitors. The army of the crown was divided between theſe two factions. Auguſtus, at laſt, forced to accept of ſupport from the Muſcovites repented that he had not had recourſe to them ſooner. One time he fled into Saxony, where his reſources were exhauſted; then he returned to Poland, where no one dared to aſſiſt him. On the other hand, the King of Sweden, victorious and tranquil, reigned over Poland more abſolutely than Auguſtus had ever done.

COUNT PIPER, who had a mind as much formed for politics as his maſter's was for true greatneſs, now propoſed to Charles XII. that he ſhould himſelf take the crown of Poland. He repreſented to him how eaſy it might be done, with a victorious army, and a powerful party in the heart of the kingdom already ſubdued. He tempted him with the title of "Defender of the Evangelic Religion," a name which flattered

flattered the ambition of Charles. It would be eaſy, he ſaid, to do in Poland what Guſtavus Vaſa had done in Sweden—to eſtabliſh Lutheraniſm, and to break the chains of the people, already enſlaved by the nobility and clergy. Charles was tempted for a moment; but glory was his idol. To that he ſacrificed his own intereſt, and the pleaſure he would have enjoyed in taking Poland from the Pope. He told Count Piper, that he was more flattered by giving than gaining kingdoms; and added, ſmiling. "You "was intended for the Miniſter of an Italian "Prince."

CHARLES was ſtill near Thorn, in that part of Royal Pruſſia, which belongs to Poland; from thence he extended his views to what was paſſing at Warſaw, and kept the neighbouring powers in awe. Prince Alexander, brother of the two Sobieſkies, who were carried into Sileſia, came and implored his aſſiſtance to revenge his wrongs. Charles granted his requeſt ſo much the more readily, as he imagined he could revenge himſelf at the ſame time. But impatient to give a King to Poland, he propoſed to Prince Alexander his mounting the throne, from which fortune ſeemed determined to exclude his brother. Charles little expected a refuſal; but Prince Alexander told him, that nothing ſhould ever engage him to profit by the misfortunes of his elder brother. The King of Sweden, Count Piper, all his friends, and particularly the young Palatine of Poſnania, Staniſlaus Leczinſky, preſſed

preſſed him to accept the Crown: he was reſolute. The neighbouring Princes heard with aſtoniſhment this uncommon refuſal, and knew not which to admire moſt, a King of Sweden, who at twenty-two years of age, gave away the Crown of Poland, or Prince Alexander, who refuſed it.

BOOK

BOOK III.

ARGUMENT.

Staniſlaus Leczinſky elected King of Poland.—Death of the Cardinal Primate.—Skilful Retreat of General Schulembourg.—Exploits of the Czar.—Foundation of Peterſburgh.—Battle of Frauenſtad.—Charles enters Saxony.—Peace of Altranſtad.—Auguſtus abdicates the Crown in Favour of Staniſlaus,—General Patkul the Czar's Plenipotentiary, is broken upon the Wheel, and quartered.—Charles receives the Ambaſſadors of Foreign Princes.—Viſits Auguſtus.

YOUNG Staniſlaus Leczinſky was at this time deputed by the Aſſembly of Warſaw to make a report to the King of Sweden of ſeveral differences which had ariſen during the abſence of Prince James. Staniſlaus had a happy countenance, full of boldneſs and ſweetneſs, with an air of probity and frankneſs, which of all external advantages is the greateſt, and gives more force to words than even eloquence itſelf. The wiſdom with which he diſcourſed of the King Auguſtus, the Aſſembly, the Cardinal Primate, and of the different intereſts which divided Poland, ſtruck Charles. King Staniſlaus did me the honour to relate to me, that he ſaid to the King of Sweden in Latin, " How can we proceed to an elec-

" tion,

" tion, if the two Princes James and Conſtantine " Sobieſky are captives?" and that Charles made anſwer, " How can we deliver the Republic, if we " do not make an election?" This converſation was the only intrigue that placed Staniſlaus on the throne. Charles prolonged the conference, that he might the better ſound the genius of the young Deputy. After the audience, he ſaid aloud, that till then he had not ſeen a man ſo proper to reconcile all parties. He made no delay in informing himſelf of the character of the Palatine Leczinſky. He learnt that he was full of bravery, and inured to fatigue; that he accuſtomed himſelf to ſleep on a ſtraw mattraſs, and would not have any of his domeſtics to attend his perſon; that he obſerved a temperance not common to that climate, poſſeſſed great œconomy, was adored by his vaſſals, and the only Lord, perhaps, in Poland, who had any friends, at a time when men acknowledged no ties, but thoſe of intereſt and faction. This character, which in ſeveral things accorded with his own, determined him entirely; and at the end of the conference he ſaid aloud, " There is the man that " ſhall always be my friend;" which words they ſoon perceived ſignified, " There is the man that " ſhall be King."

CHARLES, who had taken his reſolution on the inſtant, could not have found in all Poland a man more proper to reconcile all parties than the perſon he had choſen. The leading features of his character were

were humanity and benevolence. When Staniſlaus was afterwards withdrawn into the Duchy of Deux, Ponts, ſome partizans, who had formed a deſign of carrying him off, were taken in his preſence. "What "have I done to you," ſaid he to them, "that you "would deliver me to my enemies? Of what coun- "try are you?" Three of theſe adventurers replied that they were Frenchmen. "Well, then," ſaid he, "be like your countrymen, whom I eſteem, and be "incapable of a vile action." When he had finiſhed ſpeaking, he gave them all that he had about him, his money, watch, and gold box, and they quitted him with tears and with admiration. This I know from two ocular witneſſes.

I CAN ſay with the ſame certainty, that one day as he was arranging the ſtate of his houſehold, he put upon the liſt a French Officer, who was attached to him. The Treaſurer aſked in what quality his Majeſty choſe he ſhould be upon the liſt. "In quality of "my friend," ſaid the Prince.

I HAVE ſeen a long work, which he had compoſed, to reform, if it had been poſſible, the laws and manners of his country. In this writing he makes a ſacrifice of the privileges of the nobility to which he belonged, and of the royal prerogative, which had been given to him, to the public good, and to the neceſſities of the people; a ſacrifice which is more glorious than gaining battles.

WHEN

WHEN the Primate of Poland found that Charles XII. had nominated the Palatine Leczinſky, as Alexander had nominated Abdalonimus, he repaired to the King of Sweden, to endeavour to make him change this reſolution, as he wiſhed to give the crown to one Lubomirſky. "But what have you to alledge againſt "Staniſlaus Leczinſky?" ſaid the Conqueror. "Sire," ſaid the Primate, "he is too young." To which the King drily replied, "he wants but little of my age;" turned his back upon the Prelate, and immediately ſent the Count de Hoorn to ſignify to the Aſſembly of Warſaw, that it was neceſſary to elect a King in five days, and that they muſt alſo elect Staniſlaus Leczinſky. The Count de Hoorn arrived the 7th of July, and fixed the day of election on the 12th, in the ſame manner as he would have ordered the decampment of a battalion. The Cardinal Primate, diſappointed of the fruit of ſo many intrigues, returned to the Aſſembly, and exerted his whole ſtrength to ſet aſide an election, in which he had no part. But the King of Sweden arriving at Warſaw incognito, obliged him for that time, to be ſilent. All that the Primate could now do was, not to be preſent at the election; and as he could neither oppoſe the Conqueror, nor was willing to ſecond him, he confined himſelf to an uſeleſs neutrality.

SATURDAY the 12th of July, the day fixed for the election, being come, they aſſembled at three o'clock in the afternoon, at Colo, the place appointed for

for this ceremony: the Biſhop of Poſnania came and preſided at the aſſembly, in the place of the Cardinal Primate. He arrived, attended by ſeveral gentlemen of the party. The Count de Hoorn, and two other General Officers aſſiſted publicly at this ſolemnity, as Ambaſſadors Extraordinary from Charles to the Republic. The ſeſſion laſted till nine in the evening; when the Biſhop of Poſnania finiſhed it by declaring, in the name of the Diet, Staniſlaus elected King of Poland: they inſtantly threw up their hats into the air, and the noiſe of their acclamations drowned the cries of the oppoſers.

It was of no ſervice to the Cardinal Primate, or to thoſe, who were willing to remain neuter, to abſent themſelves from the election: they were obliged, the next day, to attend and perform homage to their new King. He received them as if he had been perfectly ſatisfied with their conduct; but the greateſt mortification they underwent, was that of being compelled to follow him to the quarters of the King of Sweden. That Prince rendered to the Sovereign he had juſt made, all the honours due to a King of Poland; and to give a greater weight to his new dignity, he aſſigned him both money and troops.

Charles XII. departed immediately from Warſaw, to finiſh the conqueſt of Poland. He had ordered his army to rendezvous before Leopold, the capital of the great Palatinate of Ruſſia, a place important in

itſelf, and ſtill more ſo by the riches with which it was filled. It was imagined that it would have held out fifteen days, on account of the fortifications, which Auguſtus had built there. The Conqueror ſat down before it on the 5th of September, and the next day took it by aſſault. All, who dared to reſiſt, were put to the ſword. The troops, victorious and maſters of the town, did not ſeparate themſelves to run to pillage, notwithſtanding the great treaſures which were in Leopold. They arranged themſelves in order of battle in the great ſquare. There, thoſe, who remained in the garriſon, came and ſurrendered themſelves priſoners of war. The King cauſed it to be publiſhed by the ſound of trumpet, that all thoſe inhabitants, who had any effects belonging to Auguſtus or his adherents, ſhould bring them to him before the cloſe of the day, on pain of death. The meaſures were ſo well taken that few dared to diſobey; and four hundred cheſts, filled with gold and ſilver coin, plate, and other valuable things were brought to the King.

The beginning of the reign of Staniſlaus was diſtinguiſhed almoſt at the ſame time by an event widely different. Some affairs, which abſolutely demanded his preſence, had obliged him to remain at Warſaw. He had with him his mother, his wife, and two daughters. In this confuſion he had nearly loſt his ſecond daughter, who was but one year old. She had been carried away by her nurſe, who had loſt her way,

way, and he found her in the manger of a ſtable in a neighbouring village, where ſhe had been abandoned. It was this very infant whom Fate, after ſtill greater viciſſitudes, elevated to be Queen of France.

THE Cardinal Primate, the Biſhop of Poſnania, and ſome Grandees of Poland, compoſed his new court. It was guarded by ſix thouſand Poles of the army of the Crown, who had lately entered into his ſervice, but whoſe fidelity had not as yet been proved. General Hoorn, governor of the town, had not more than fifteen hundred Swedes with him. There was a profound tranquillity at Warſaw, and Staniſlaus propoſed to depart in a few days for the conqueſt of Leopold; when, all on a ſudden, he was informed that a numerous army was approaching the town. It was King Auguſtus; who by a new effort, and one of the moſt ſkilful marches that ever general made, had deceived the King of Sweden, and was coming with twenty thouſand men to fall upon Warſaw, and to carry off his rival.

WARSAW was very ill fortified; the Poliſh troops, who were to defend it, were not to be relied on; and Auguſtus's ſpies being in the town, Staniſlaus muſt have periſhed, had he remained there. He accordingly ſent back his family into Poſnania, under a guard of Poliſh troops, ſuch as he had moſt confidence in. The Cardinal Primate fled among the firſt to the frontiers of Pruſſia; many of the nobles took different

different roads; as for the new King, he immediately ſet out to find Charles XII. learning at an early period to ſuffer diſgrace; and forced to quit the capital, of which he had been, but ſix weeks before, elected ſovereign. The Biſhop of Poſnania was the only perſon, who could not eſcape; he was confined by a dangerous diſtemper in Warſaw. Part of the ſix thouſand Poles followed Staniſlaus, the reſt eſcorted his family. Such, whoſe fidelity it was not judged prudent to expoſe to the temptation of returning to the ſervice of Auguſtus, were ſent into Poſnania. As for General Hoorn, who was governor of Warſaw for the King of Sweden, he remained with his fifteen hundred Swedes in the caſtle.

AUGUSTUS entered into his capital as a ſovereign irritated and triumphant. The inhabitants, before laid under contribution by the King Sweden, were ſtill more hardly treated by Auguſtus. The Cardinal's palace, and all the houſes of the confederate Lords, with all their wealth, both in town and country, were given to pillage. What was the moſt ſurprizing in this ſudden revolution was, that the Pope's Nuncio, who came with King Auguſtus, demanded, in the name of his maſter, that they ſhould deliver up to him the Biſhop of Poſnania, as ſubject to the Church of Rome, in the quality of a Biſhop, and the favourer of a Prince placed on the throne by the arms of a Lutheran.

THE

THE Court of Rome, which has always ſtriven to augment its temporal power by means of its ſpiritual, had a long time ſince eſtabliſhed in Poland a kind of juriſdiction, at the head of which is the Pope's Nuncio. Its miniſters never let ſlip any favourable opportunity to extend their power; a power revered by the multitude, but always oppoſed by thoſe of more wiſdom. They attributed to themſelves a right to judge of all eccleſiaſtical cauſes; and, in times of trouble, had uſurped ſeveral other prerogatives, in which they maintained themſelves till about the year 1728, when theſe abuſes were corrected; abuſes, ſuch as are never reformed, till they become abſolutely intolerable. Auguſtus, happy in any opportunity of puniſhing the Biſhop of Poſnania with decorum, and at the ſame time deſirous to pleaſe the Court of Rome, againſt which at any other time he would have exerted himſelf, delivered the Poliſh Prelate into the hands of the Nuncio. The Biſhop, after beholding his houſe pillaged, was carried by the ſoldiers to the houſe of the Italian Miniſter, and from thence ſent into Saxony, where he died. Count de Hoorn ſuſtained in the caſtle, where he was ſhut up, the continual fire of the enemy; till, the place being no longer able to hold out, he ſurrendered himſelf priſoner of war, together with his fifteen hundred Swedes. This was the firſt advantage that Auguſtus had, during the torrent of his bad fortune, over the victorious arms of his enemy.

THIS

THIS laſt effort was the blaze of a fire that was juſt going out. His troops, who were aſſembled in haſte, conſiſted of Poles, ready to abandon him on the firſt misfortune; of Saxon recruits, who had never till then ſeen any thing of war; of vagabond Coſſacks, more fit to plunder the conquered, than to conquer; and all of them trembled at the very name of the King of Sweden.

THAT Conqueror, accompanied by King Staniſlaus, went to ſeek his enemy, at the head of his choiceſt troops. The Saxon army fled every where before him. The towns for thirty miles round ſent him their keys; nor was there a day, which was not ſignalized by ſome advantage. Succeſs became too familiar to Charles. He ſaid, "it was rather going to hunt, than "going to war," and complained that his victories coſt him ſo little.

AUGUSTUS entruſted the command of his army for ſome time to Count de Schulembourg, a very able General, but who had need of all his experience at the head of a diſpirited army. He ſtudied more to preſerve his maſter's troops, than to conquer. He carried on the war by ſtratagem, the two Kings puſhed it with vigour. He ſtole ſeveral marches upon them, took poſſeſſion of ſome advantageous poſts, and ſacrificed part of his cavalry to give his infantry time to make a ſure retreat.

AFTER

AFTER many feints and countermarches, he found himſelf near Punitz, in the Palatinate of Poſnania, thinking that Staniſlaus and the King of Sweden were at fifty leagues diſtance from him. He learned, upon his arrival, that the two Kings had marched thoſe fifty leagues in nine days, and that they were come to attack him with ten or twelve thouſand horſe. Schulembourg had but eight thouſand foot and a thouſand horſe. It was neceſſary to maintain himſelf againſt a ſuperior army, againſt the name of the King of Sweden, and againſt the natural fear, with which ſo many defeats had naturally inſpired the Saxons. He had always maintained, againſt the opinions of the German Generals, that infantry was able to reſiſt cavalry in the open field, even without the aſſiſtance of chevaux de frize; and he this day, made the experiment againſt a victorious cavalry, commanded by the two Kings, and by the choiceſt of the Swediſh Generals. He poſted himſelf ſo advantageouſly, that he could not be ſurrounded. The firſt rank, armed with pikes and fuſees, knelt with one knee upon the ground; and the ſoldiers, placed cloſely together, preſented to the enemy's horſe a kind of rampart, pointed with pikes and bayonets; the ſecond rank inclined a little over the ſhoulders of the firſt; and the third, ſtanding upright, fired at the ſame time from behind the other two. The Swedes, with their uſual impetuoſity, preſſed down upon the Saxons, who expected them with firmneſs: the fire of the fuſees, together with the points of the pikes and bayonets, maddened the

the horſes, which began to rear inſtead of advancing. By theſe means the Swedes attacked in diſorder, and the Saxons defended themſelves by keeping their ranks.

If Charles had diſmounted his cavalry, Schulembourg's army muſt have been routed without reſource. This was the chief apprehenſion of that General, who expected that his enemy would take this reſolution every moment; but neither the King of Sweden, who had ſo often put in practice all the ſtratagems of war, nor any of his Generals, conceived this idea. This unequal combat of a body of cavalry again ſt infantry, continued with frequent interruptions, and reſumed attacks, near three hours. The Swedes loſt more horſes than men. Schulembourg gave ground at laſt, but his troops were not broken. He formed them into an oblong ſquare; and though he was wounded in five places, he, in this form, maintained an orderly retreat, in the middle of the night, into the little town of Gurau, about three leagues from the field of battle.—But he had ſcarcely begun to breathe in this place, when the two Kings ſuddenly appeared after him.

Beyond Gurau, in marching towards the river Oder, was a thick wood, by leading them through which, the Saxon General ſaved his fatigued infantry. The Swedes, without heſitation, purſued them through the wood, advancing with difficulty through paths

paths ſcarcely paſſable by foot-travellers. The Saxons had not croſſed the wood above five hours before the Swediſh cavalry. On the other ſide of this wood runs the river Parts, at the foot of a village named Rutſen. Schulembourg had ſent for boats to be immediately aſſembled, which carried over his troops, of which half were deſtroyed. Charles arrived at the time that Shulembourg had reached the oppoſite ſhore. Never did a conqueror purſue his enemy ſo vigorouſly. The reputation of Schulembourg depended upon his eſcaping from the King of Sweden: the King of Sweden, on his ſide, imagined his glory intereſted in taking Schulembourg, and the remains of his army: he loſt no time; but made his cavalry ſwim over. The Saxons found themſelves ſhut up between this river Parts, and the great river Oder, which takes its ſource in Sileſia, and is very deep and rapid at this place.

The deſtruction of Schulembourg appeared inevitable; he attempted, however, to extricate himſelf from this extremity, by one of thoſe ſtrokes of art, which are equivalent to victories, and which are ſo much the more glorious, as Fortune has no ſhare in them. He had no more than four thouſand men remaining: upon his right was a mill, which he filled with his grenadiers; upon his left, a marſh; a ditch lay before him; and his rear-guard was upon the banks of the Oder. He had no pontoons for paſſing the river, but, ſo early as the evening before, he had

ordered floats to be prepared. Charles, the moment of his arrival, attacked the mill; perſuaded, that as ſoon as it was taken, the Saxons muſt either periſh in the river or in the field, or that at leaſt they muſt ſurrender at diſcretion, together with their General. However, the floats were ready, the Saxons paſſed the Oder by favour of the night, and when Charles had forced the mill, he no longer found the enemy's army. The two Kings beſtowed their encomiums upon this retreat, which is to this day ſpoken of with admiration in the Empire, and Charles could not prevent himſelf from ſaying, "Schulembourg has "conquered us to-day." But what covered Schulembourg with honour ſcarcely proved of any ſervice to Auguſtus. That Prince abrndonded Poland once more to his enemies: he retired into Saxony, and prepared with precipitation the fortifications of Dreſden; being afraid, and not without reaſon, for the capital of his hereditary dominions.

CHARLES XII. now beheld Poland reduced to ſubjection; and his Generals, following their King's example, had juſt beat in Courland ſeveral ſmall bodies of the Muſcovites, who, ſince the great battle of Narva, had only ſhewn themſelves in ſmall parties, and made war in thoſe quarters like the vagabond Tartars, who pillage, fly, and then return only to fly again.

WHEREVER the Swedes came they imagined themſelves ſure of a victory, even when they were only twenty to an hundred. At this happy conjuncture Staniſlaus

Staniſlaus prepared for his coronation. Fortune, which had elected him at Warſaw, and which had alſo driven him thence, again recalled him thither, amidſt the acclamations of a crowd of nobility, whom the fortune of war had attached to him. A Diet was there convened, and every obſtacle removed; nor were there any but the Court of Rome, who oppoſed him.

It was natural for Rome to declare for King Auguſtus, who from a Proteſtant had become a Catholic, that he might mount the throne; and againſt Staniſlaus, placed on the ſame throne by the great enemy of the Catholic Religion. Clement XI. at that time Pope, ſent briefs to every Prelate of Poland, and above all to the Cardinal Primate, by which he threatened excommunication to thoſe, who dared to aſſiſt at the conſecration of Staniſlaus, or attempt any thing againſt the rights of King Auguſtus.

If theſe briefs were delivered to the Biſhops, who were at Warſaw, it was to be feared that ſome would obey through weakneſs, and that the greater part, availing themſelves of the circumſtance, would render themſelves more troubleſome, as they were the more neceſſary. Every precaution was therefore uſed, that the letters of the Pope ſhould not be received in Warſaw. However, a Franciſcan received the briefs ſecretly, in order that he might deliver them into the Prelates hands. He immediately gave one to the ſuffragan of Chelm: this Prelate, who was ſtrongly attached to Staniſlaus, carried it to the King unopened. The

King

King cauſed the monk to be brought to him, and aſked him, how he dared to take charge of ſuch a buſineſs. The Franciſcan replied, that it was by order of his General. Staniſlaus deſired him, for the future, to mind the orders of his King in preference to thoſe of the General of the Franciſcans; and inſtantly baniſhed him the town.

The ſame day a placart was publiſhed by the King of Sweden, by which it was forbidden, under the moſt grievous penalties, to all eccleſiaſtics, ſecular as well as regular, then in Warſaw, to meddle with the affairs of ſtate. For greater ſecurity, he had guards planted at the gates of every Prelate, and forbad any ſtranger to enter the town. He took upon himſelf theſe little ſeverities, in order that Staniſlaus ſhould not quarrel with the clergy at his acceſſion. He ſaid, that he relaxed himſelf from his military fatigues in ſtopping the intrigues of the Romiſh Court, and that he muſt fight againſt that with paper, when he was obliged to attack other ſovereigns with real arms.

The Cardinal Primate was ſolicited by Charles and Staniſlaus to come and perform the ceremony of the coronation. But as he did not imagine himſelf obliged to quit Dantzick to conſecrate a King, whom he did not wiſh to have been elected, and as his policy was never to do any thing without a pretext, he reſolved to provide a lawful excuſe for his refuſal. He therefore cauſed the Pope's brief to be fixed in the night-

night-time to the gate of his own houſe. The Magiſtrates of Dantzick, ſtruck with the indignity, made ſtrict ſearch after the offenders, but they were never found. The Primate feigned to be irritated, but nevertheleſs was well ſatisfied. He had now a pretext for not conſecrating the new King; and at the ſame time kept fair with Charles XII. Auguſtus, Staniſlaus, and the Pope. He died a few days after, leaving his country in a dreadful confuſion, and had gained no advantage by all his intrigues, but that of embroiling himſelf at once with the three Kings, Charles, Auguſtus, and Staniſlaus; with the Republic, and with the Pope, who had ordered him to repair to Rome, to give an account of his conduct: but as even politicians have ſometimes remorſe in their laſt moments, he wrote to King Auguſtus on his death-bed, beſeeching his pardon.

THE conſecration was performed with tranquillity and magnificence the 4th of October 1705, in the city of Warſaw, notwithſtanding the cuſtom, which ſubſiſts in Poland of crowning the Kings at Cracow. Staniſlaus Leczinſky and his wife Charlotta Opalinſka were conſecrated King and Queen of Poland, by the hands of the Archbiſhop of Leopold, aſſiſted by ſeveral other Prelates. Charles XII. ſaw the ceremony incognito, the only advantage he reaped from his conqueſts.

WHILE he was giving a King to the conquered Poles, and Denmark did not dare to trouble him; while

while the King of Pruſſia ſought his friendſhip, and Auguſtus was withdrawing himſelf to his hereditary dominions; the Czar was becoming every day more and more formidable. He had but weakly ſupported Auguſtus in Poland; but he had made powerful diverſions in Ingria.

As for him, he not only began to be a good ſoldier himſelf, but he likewiſe taught the art of war to the Muſcovites; diſcipline was eſtabliſhed throughout his troops; he had good engineers, an artillery well ſerved, and many good officers; and he likewiſe knew the great art of ſubſiſting his armies. Some of his Generals had learned both how to fight, and, as occaſion required, to decline fighting: beſides, he had formed a navy capable of making head againſt the Swedes in the Baltic.

Confiding in all theſe advantages, entirely owing to his own genius, and the abſence of the King of Sweden, he took Narva by aſſault the 21ſt of Auguſt, in the year 1704, after a regular ſiege, and after he had prevented its receiving any ſuccours, either by ſea or land. The ſoldiers, once maſters of the town, ran to pillage; and abandoned themſelves to the moſt enormous barbarities. The Czar ran on every ſide to ſtop the diſorder and maſſacre; he ſnatched the women from the hands of the ſoldiers, who, after they had violated them, were going to cut their throats. He was even obliged to kill with his own hand ſeveral Muſcovites, who would not obey

obey his orders. They ſhew to this day at Narva, in the town houſe, the table upon which he laid his ſword as he entered; and they repeat the words with which he addreſsed the citizens, who were aſſembled there: "It is not with the blood of the inhabitants "that this ſword is ſtained, but with that of "the Muſcovites, which I have ſhed to ſave your "lives."

If the Czar had always obſerved this humanity, he had been the firſt of men. He aſpired to more than to deſtroy towns: he, at that time, was founding a city not far from Narva, in the middle of his new conqueſts; this was the city of Petersburgh, which he has ſince made his reſidence, and the centre of commerce. It is ſituated between Finland and Ingria, in a marſhy iſland, around which the Neva divides itſelf into ſeveral branches, before it falls into the Gulph of Finland: he himſelf drew the plan of the city, the fortreſs, and the harbour, the quays, which embelliſh it, and the forts, which defend its entrance. This iſland, uncultivated and deſart, which was nothing but a heap of mud during the ſhort ſummer of thoſe climates, and in the winter a frozen pool, into which there was no entry but through pathleſs woods and deep moraſſes, and which had, till then, been the haunt of wolves and bears, was filled in 1703 with above three hundred thouſand men, whom the Czar had aſſembled from his dominions. The peaſants of the kingdom of Aſtracan, and thoſe, who inhabit the frontiers of China, were tranſported to Petersburgh.

He

He was obliged to clear foreſts, to make roads, to drain marſhes, and to raiſe banks, before he could lay the foundation of the city. Nature was forced in every thing. The Czar was reſolute to people a country, which did not appear to be deſtined for men; neither the inundations, which razed his works, the ſterility of the ſoil, the ignorance of the workmen, nor even the mortality, which deſtroyed two hundred thouſand men in the beginning, could make him change his reſolution. The town was founded amidſt the obſtacles which nature, the genius of the people, and an unhappy war, had raiſed againſt it. Peterſburgh had become a city in 1705, and its harbour was filled with ſhips. The Emperor attracted ſtrangers by his beneficence, diſtributing lands to ſome, giving houſes to others, and welcoming every artiſt that came to civilize this ſavage climate. Above all, he had rendered Petersbugh inacceſſible to the efforts of his enemies. The Swediſh Generals, who frequently beat his troops in every other quarter, were not able to hurt this infant colony. It was tranquil in the midſt of the war which ſurrounded it.

THE Czar, thus creating to himſelf new dominions, always held out his hand to Auguſtus, who was loſing his; he perſuaded him by General Patkul, who had lately entered into the ſervice of Muſcovy, and was then the Czar's Ambaſſador in Saxony, to come to Grodno, to confer with him once more on the unhappy ſtate of his affairs. Auguſtus came there with

ſome

ſome troops, accompanied by General Schulembourg, whoſe paſſage over the Oder had rendered him famous through the North, and in whom he placed his laſt hope. The Czar arrived there alſo, followed by an army of 70,000 men. Theſe two Monarchs concerted new plans for carrying on the war. Auguſtus being dethroned, was no longer afraid of irritating the Poles, by abandoning their country to the Muſcovite troops. It was reſolved that the army of the Czar ſhould divide itſelf into ſeveral bodies, to ſtop the King of Sweden at every ſtep. It was at the time of this interview that Auguſtus renewed the order of the White Eagle; a weak reſource to attach to his intereſt ſome Poliſh Lords, more deſirous of real advantages than of an empty honour, which becomes ridiculous when it is held of a Prince, who has nothing of a King but the name. The conference of the two Kings finiſhed in an extraordinary manner. The Czar departed ſuddenly, and left his troops with his ally, to haſten and cruſh a rebellion, with which he was threatened in Aſtracan. Scarcely was he gone, before Auguſtus ordered Patkul to be arreſted at Dreſden. All Europe was ſurpriſed that he dared, againſt the law of nations, and, in appearance, againſt his own intereſt, to throw into priſon the Ambaſſador of the only Prince, who protected him.

The ſecret ſpring of this tranſaction, as a ſon of King Auguſtus did me the honour to tell me, was as follows: Patkul, proſcribed in Sweden for having defended the privileges of Livonia, his native country,

had been General to Auguſtus; but his high and lofty ſpirit could ill accord with the haughtineſs of General Fleming, the favourite of the King, who was more imperious and lofty than himſelf; he therefore paſſed into the ſervice of the Czar, whoſe General he then was, and his Ambaſſador at the Court of Auguſtus. Poſſeſſed with a penetrating genius, he plainly perceived that the views of Fleming and the Chancellor of Saxony were, to propoſe a peace to the King of Sweden at any price whatſoever. He immediately formed a deſign to prevent them, and to effect an accommodation between the Czar, and Sweden. The Chancellor diſcovered his project, and obtained leave to ſeize his perſon. King Auguſtus told the Czar, that he was a traitor, who betrayed them both. He was, however, no farther culpable than in having ſerved his new maſter too well; but an ill-timed ſervice frequently meets with the puniſhment due to treaſon.

In the mean time, on one ſide, the ſeventy thouſand Ruſſians, divided into ſeveral ſmall bodies, were burning and ravaging the lands of Staniſlaus' adherents; while, on the other, Schulembourg was advancing with freſh troops. The good fortune of the Swedes diſperſed theſe two armies in leſs than two months. Charles XII. and Staniſlaus attacked the ſeparate bodies of the Muſcovites, one after the other, with ſuch ſpirit, that one Muſcovite General was beat, before he heard of the defeat of his companion.

No

No obſtacle could ſtop the conqueror: if he found a river between him and the enemy, Charles and his Swedes ſwam acroſs it. A party of Swedes took the baggage of Auguſtus, in which were two hundred thouſand crowns of ſilver coined. Staniſlaus ſeized eight hundred thouſand ducats belonging to Prince Menzikoff, the Muſcovite General. Charles, at the head of his cavalry, marched thirty leagues in twenty-four hours; every ſoldier leading a horſe in his hand, to mount when his own was weary. The Muſcovites terrified, and reduced to a ſmall number, fled in diſorder beyond the Boriſthenes.

While Charles was driving the Muſcovites before him, even into the very heart of Livonia, Schulembourg repaſſed the Oder, and came at the head of twenty thouſand men to give battle to the Grand Marſhal Renſchild, who was eſteemed the beſt General of Charles XII. and was called the Parmenio of this Alexander of the North. Theſe two illuſtrious Generals, who ſeemed to participate of the deſtiny of their maſters, encountered each other near Punitz, in a place called Frauenſtad, a ſpot already fatal to the troops of Auguſtus. Renſchild had but thirteen battalions, and twenty-two ſquadrons, which made in all about ten thouſand men. Schulembourg had double that number. It is remarkable, that he had in his army a body of ſix or ſeven thouſand Muſcovites, who had been long diſciplined in Saxony, and were looked upon as veteran troops, who united the ferocity of the Muſcovites

vites to the German diſcipline. The battle of Frauenſtad was fought the 12th of February 1706; but this very General Schulembourg, who, with four thouſand men had, in ſome meaſure, baffled the fortune of the King of Sweden, ſunk under that of General Renſchild. The combat did not laſt a quarter of an hour. The Saxons did not reſiſt a moment; and the Muſcovites threw down their arms as ſoon as they ſaw the Swedes: the panic was ſo ſudden, and the diſorder ſo great, that the conquerors found on the field of battle ſeveral thouſand loaded fuſees, which the enemy had thrown down without firing. Never was defeat more ſudden, more complete, or more diſgraceful; and yet no General ever made a finer diſpoſition than Schulembourg, even in the opinion of the Swediſh Generals, as well as of the Saxons, who ſaw, in this day, how little human prudence is miſtreſs of events.

AMONG the priſoners they found an entire regiment of French. Theſe unfortunate men had been taken by the Saxon troops, in 1704, at the famous battle of Hochſtet, ſo fatal to the grandeur of Louis XIV. They had entered ſince that into the ſervice of King Auguſtus, who had formed them into a regiment of dragoons, and had given the command to a Frenchman of the houſe of Joyeuſe. The Colonel was killed at the firſt, or rather the only charge of the Swedes, and the whole regiment was made priſoners of war. The ſame day theſe Frenchmen begged to ſerve Charles

Charles XII. and they were accordingly received into his ſervice by a ſingular deſtiny, which reſerved them once more to change their conqueror into their maſter.

WITH regard to the Muſcovites, they begged their lives on their knees; but were inhumanly maſſacred, about ſix hours after the combat, to revenge the violences offered by their countrymen; and alſo that the Swedes might get rid of priſoners, whom they knew not how to diſpoſe of.

THE King, upon his return from Lithuania, learned this freſh victory; but the ſatisfaction he received from it was diſturbed by a ſmall degree of jealouſy. He could not prevent himſelf from ſaying, "This is the "laſt time that Renſchild ſhall be compared with me."

AUGUSTUS now ſaw himſelf without reſources: he had no place left him but Cracow, in which he was ſhut up with two regiments of Muſcovites, two of Saxons, and ſome troops of the army of the Crown, by whom he was even afraid of being delivered up to the conqueror; but his ruin was complete, when he learned that Charles XII. was at laſt entered into Saxony, on the 1ſt of September 1706.

HE had marched through Sileſia, even without deigning to advertiſe the Court of Vienna. Germany was alarmed; the Diet of Ratiſbon, which repreſents

ſents the Empire, but whoſe reſolutions are often as ineffectual as ſolemn, declared the King of Sweden an enemy to the Empire, if he paſſed the Oder with his army; which circumſtance determined him to march the ſooner into Germany.

At his approach the villages were deſerted, and the inhabitants fled on every ſide, Charles behaved here as at Copenhagen; he cauſed it every where to be publiſhed, that he was only come to give them peace, and that all thoſe, who would return home, and pay the contributions he demanded, ſhould be treated as his proper ſubjects, but that the reſt ſhould be purſued without quarter. This declaration, from a Prince, who was never known to break his word, made thoſe return in crowds, who before had fled from fear. He pitched his camp at Altranſtad, near the plain of Lutzen, a field famous for the victory and death of Guſtavus Adolphus. He went to ſee the place where that great man was killed. When they had conducted him to the ſpot, "I have endeavoured," ſaid he, "to "live like him; God will grant me one day, perhaps, "a death as glorious."

He ſent orders from the camp to the States of Saxony to aſſemble, and tranſmit to him, without delay, the regiſters of the electoral finances. As ſoon as he had them in his power, and was informed juſtly of what Saxony was able to furniſh, he taxed it at ſix hundred and twenty-five thouſand rix-dollars a month.

Beſides

Beſides this contribution, the Saxons were obliged to furniſh every Swediſh ſoldier with two pounds of fleſh, two pounds of bread, two pots of beer, and four ſols a-day, together with forage for their horſes. The contributions thus regulated, the King eſtabliſhed a new police to protect the Saxons from the inſults of his own ſoldiers: he ordered, that in every town where he placed garriſons, the inn-keepers, who quartered his ſoldiers, ſhould give certificates every month of their conduct, in default of which, the ſoldier was not to have his pay. Beſides this, inſpectors went every fifteen days from houſe to houſe, to inform themſelves whether the Swedes had committed any outrage; and they were likewiſe authorized to indemnify the inn-keeper, and puniſh the offender.

It is well known under what ſevere diſcipline the troops of Charles XII. were kept: that they never pillaged towns taken by aſſault, before they received permiſſion: that they even then plundered in a regular manner, and left off at the firſt ſignal. The Swedes boaſt to this day of the diſcipline, which they obſerved in Saxony, while the Saxons complain of the terrible outrages they committed; contradictions which it would be impoſſible to reconcile, were it not known how differently different men behold the ſame object. It was ſcarcely poſſible but that the conquerors would ſometimes abuſe their rights, as the conquered would take the ſlighteſt injuries for the moſt enormous outrages. One day as the King was riding near Leipſick.

ſick, a Saxon peaſant came and threw himſelf at his feet, beſeeching him to grant him juſtice on a grenadier, who had juſt taken from him what was deſigned for his family's dinner. The King immediately cauſed the ſoldier to be brought to him: "Is it true," ſaid he, with a ſtern countenance, "that you have robbed "this man?" "Sire," ſaid the ſoldier, "I have not "done him ſo much injury as you have done his "maſter; you have taken from him a kingdom, I "have taken from this fellow nothing but a turkey." The King gave the peaſant ten ducats with his own hand, and pardoned the ſoldier for the wit and boldneſs of his reply; ſaying to him, "Remember, "friend, that if I have taken a kingdom from Au- "guſtus, I have kept nothing to myſelf."

THE great fair of Leipſick was held as uſual; the merchants coming there in perfect ſecurity: they ſaw not one Swediſh ſoldier in the fair: one would have ſaid, that the army of the King of Sweden was in Saxony, only to preſerve the ſafety of the country. He commanded throughout the Electorate with a power as abſolute, and tranquillity as profound, as he did in Stockholm.

KING AUGUSTUS, wandering in Poland, deprived at once of his kingdom and electorate, at laſt wrote a letter with his own hand to Charles XII. begging him to grant a peace. He ſecretly charged the Baron D'Imhoff, in conjunction with M. Fingſtein, Referen-

dary

dary of the privy Council, to carry this letter; and gave them both full powers, and a blank ſigned: "Go," (ſaid he to them) "endeavour to obtain for me rea- "ſonable and chriſtian conditions." He was reduced to the neceſſity of concealing theſe overtures, and to decline the open mediation of any Prince; for, being then in Poland at the mercy of the Muſcovites, he had reaſon to fear that that dangerous ally, whom he was now going to abandon, would take vengeance on him for his ſubmiſſion to the conqueror. His two Plenipotentiaries came to Charles's camp in the night-time, and had a private audience. The King, having read the letter, told them they ſhould have his anſwer immediately; and accordingly retiring to his cloſet, he wrote as follows:

"I CONSENT to give peace on the following con- "ditions, in which it muſt not be expected that I "ever will make the leaſt alteration.

I. "THAT Auguſtus renounce for ever the crown "of Poland; that he acknowledge Staniſlaus as law- "ful King; and that he promiſe never to think of "remounting the throne, not even after the death of "Staniſlaus.

II. "THAT he cancel all other treaties, particularly "thoſe he has made with the Muſcovites.

III. "THAT he honourably ſend back to my camp "the Princes Sobieſky, with the other priſoners whom "he has taken.

IV. "THAT he deliver up all the deſerters, who "have entered into his ſervice, particulary John Pat- "kul; and that he ſtop all proceedings againſt ſuch "as have deſerted from his ſervice and entered in- "to mine."

THIS written anſwer he gave to Count Piper, with orders to ſettle the particulars with the Plenipotentiaries of Auguſtus. Theſe gentlemen were ſhocked at the ſeverity of the propoſals, and uſed all the little arts that men without power can employ, to mitigate, if poſſible, the rigour of the King. They had ſeveral conferences with Count Piper; but that Miniſter anſwered all their arguments with this ſhort reply: "Such "is the will of the King my maſter, and he never "changes his reſolution."

WHILE theſe negociations were carrying on in Saxony, fortune ſeemed to put Auguſtus in a condition to obtain more honourable terms, and to treat with his conqueror on a more equal footing.

PRINCE MENZIKOFF, Generaliſſimo of the Muſcovites, entered Poland with a body of thirty thouſand men, at a time when Auguſtus not only did not deſire their aſſiſtance, bnt even dreaded it. He had only

only with him ſome Poliſh and Saxon troops, making in all about ſix thouſand men. With ſo ſmall a body of troops, ſurrounded by the army of Prince Menzikoff, he had every thing to fear, in caſe the negociation ſhould be diſcovered. He ſaw himſelf at once dethroned by his enemy, and in danger of being taken priſoner by his ally. In this delicate criſis, one of the Swediſh Generals, named Meyerfield, at the head of ten thouſand men, appeared at Caliſh, near the Palatinate of Poſnania. Prince Menzikoff preſſed Auguſtus to give them battle; who, being greatly embarraſſed, delayed the engagement under various pretexts; for, though the enemy had but one third of his number, there were four thouſand Swedes in Meyerfield's army, and that alone was ſufficient to render the event doubtful. To attack the Swedes during the negociation, and to loſe the battle, was, in effect, to deepen the abyſs, in which he was already plunged. He reſolved, therefore, to ſend a truſty ſervant to the General of the enemy, in order to give him ſome diſtant hints of the peace, and adviſe him to retreat. But this advice produced an effect contrary to what he expected. General Meyerfield thought they were laying a ſnare to intimidate him; and for that reaſon reſolved to hazard the battle.

The Ruſſians now, for the firſt time, conquered the Swedes in a pitched battle. This victory, which Auguſtus gained almoſt againſt his will, was entire and complete. In the midſt of his bad fortune, he entered

deliver up a General Officer and a public Miniſter. It was ſtill a greater debaſement to be obliged to ſend the jewels and archives of the crown to his ſucceſſor Staniſlaus. But what completed his degradation was, his being at laſt compelled to congratulate, on his acceſſion to the throne, the man, who was going to uſurp his place. Charles required Auguſtus to write a letter to Staniſlaus. The dethroned King endeavoured to evade the demand; but Charles inſiſted upon his writing the letter, and he was obliged to comply. Here follows an exact tranſcript of it, which I have ſeen. It is copied from the original, which is ſtill in the poſſeſſion of King Staniſlaus.

" SIR AND BROTHER,

" WE little imagined it would have been neceſſary " to enter into a literary correſpondence with your " Majeſty; nevertheleſs, in order to pleaſe his Ma- " jeſty of Sweden, and to avoid the ſuſpicion of our " being unwilling to gratify his deſire, we hereby " congratulate you on your acceſſion to the throne; " and wiſh you may find in your native country more " faithful ſubjects than we have left there. All the " world will do us the juſtice to believe, that we hav[illegible] " received nothing but the moſt ungrateful return[illegible] " for our good offices, and that the greater part [illegible] " our ſubjects ſeemed to have no other aim than t[illegible] " haſten our ruin. Wiſhing that you may never b[illegible]

" expoſe[illegible]

" expoſed to the like misfortunes, we commit you to
" the protection of God.

" Your brother and neighbour,

DRESDEN, APRIL 8, 1707. AUGUSTUS, King."

AUGUSTUS was obliged to give orders to all his magiſtrates no longer to ſtile him King of Poland, and to eraſe this title, which he now renounced, from the public prayers. He was leſs averſe to the releaſe of the Sobieſkies. Theſe Princes, upon quitting their priſon refuſed to ſee him; but the ſacrifice of Patkul was the ſevereſt of all. The Czar of Muſcovy, on the one hand, loudly demanded him back as his Ambaſſador; and on the other, the King of Sweden, with the moſt terrible menaces in caſe of refuſal, inſiſted that he ſhould be delivered up to him. Patkul was then confined in the caſtle of Konigſtein, in Saxony. Auguſtus thought he might eaſily gratify Charles XII. and ſave his own honour. He ſent his guards to deliver this unhappy man to the Swediſh troops; but he previouſly diſpatched a ſecret order to the Governor of Konigſtein to let his priſoner eſcape. The bad fortune of Patkul defeated the pains that were taken to ſave him. The Governor, knowing that Patkul was very rich, had a mind to make him purchaſe his liberty. The priſoner ſtill relying on the law of nations, and informed of the intentions of Auguſtus, refuſed to pay for that, which he thought he had a title to obtain for nothing. The guards

guards, who were commiſſioned to ſeize the priſoner, arrived during this interval, and immediately delivered him to four Swediſh captains, who carried him forthwith to the general quarters at Altranſtad, where he remained for three months faſtened to a ſtake with a heavy iron chain; from whence he was conducted to Caſimir.

CHARLES forgetting that Patkul was the Czar's Ambaſſador, and conſidering him only as his own ſubject, ordered a Council of War to try him with the utmoſt rigour. He was condemned to be broken alive on the wheel, and then quartered. A Chaplain came to inform him of the fatal ſentence, without acquainting him with the manner in which it was to be executed. Patkul, who had braved death in ſo many battles, finding himſelf alone with a Prieſt, and his courage being no longer ſupported by pride or paſſion, the ſources of human intrepidity, poured a flood of tears into the Chaplain's boſom. He was betrothed to a Saxon lady, called Madam d'Einſiedel, a woman of birth, of merit, and of beauty, and whom he expected to have married, about the time that he found himſelf condemned to die. He entreated the Chaplain to wait upon her, to give her all the conſolation in his power, and to aſſure her that he died full of the moſt tender affection for his incomparable miſtreſs. When he was brought to the place of puniſhment, and beheld the wheel and ſtakes prepared for his execution, he fell into convulſions, and threw himſelf into the

arms

arms of the Miniſter, who embraced him, covered him with his cloak, and wept over him. A Swediſh Officer than read aloud a paper to the following effect:

"THIS is to declare, that it is the expreſs order of "his Majeſty, our moſt merciful Lord, that this man, "who is a traitor to his country, be broken upon the "wheel, and quartered, in order to atone for his "crimes, and to be an example to others; that every "one may beware of treaſon, and faithfully ſerve "his King." At the words "our moſt merciful "Lord," Patkul cried out, "What mercy?" and at thoſe of "traitor to his country"—"Alas (ſaid he) "I have ſerved it but too well." He received ſixteen blows, and ſuffered the moſt excruciating tortures that can be imagined. Thus died the unfortunate John Reinhold Patkul, Ambaſſador and General of the Emperor of Ruſſia.

THOSE, who looked upon him only as a rebel, ſaid that he deſerved death; but thoſe, who conſidered him as a Livonian, born in a province that had privileges to defend, and remembered that he had been baniſhed from Livonia, for no other reaſon, than having defended thoſe privileges, called him a martyr to the liberty of his country. It was on all hands agreed, however, that the title of Ambaſſador to the Czar ought to have rendered his perſon ſacred. The King of Sweden alone, educated in the principles of arbitrary power, thought that he had only performed

an act of juſtice, whilſt all Europe condemned his cruelty.

THE mangled limbs of the ſufferer remained expoſed upon gibbets till 1713, when Auguſtus, having regained his throne, cauſed theſe teſtimonies of the neceſſity to which he had been reduced at Altranſtad to be gathered together. They were brought to Warſaw in a box, and delivered to him in the preſence of the French Envoy. The King of Poland, ſhewing the box to this Miniſter, only ſaid, "Theſe are the "limbs of Patkul; without adding any thing, either to blame his conduct, or to bewail his memory; and without any one daring to ſpeak on ſo delicate and mournful a ſubject.

ABOUT this time a Livonian named Paikel, an officer in the Saxon troops, who had been taken priſoner in the field, was condemned at Stockholm, by a decree of the Senate; but his ſentence was only to loſe his head. This difference of puniſhments, in the ſame caſe, made it but too plain, that Charles, in putting Patkul to ſuch a cruel death, was more anxious to avenge himſelf, than to puniſh the criminal. Be that as it may, Paikel, after his condemnation, propoſed to the Senate to impart to the King the ſecret of making gold, on condition that he ſhould obtain his pardon. He made the experiment in priſon, in preſence of Colonel Hamilton and the Magiſtrates of the town; and whether he had actually diſcovered

diſcovered ſome uſeful ſecret, or which is more probable, had only acquired the art of deceiving with ability, they carried the gold, which was found in the crucible, to the Mint at Stockholm, and gave the Senate ſuch a full, and ſeemingly ſuch an important account of the matter, that the Queen-dowager, Charles's grand-mother, ordered his execution to be ſuſpended, till the King ſhould be informed of this uncommon affair, and ſend his orders accordingly.

THE King made anſwer, "That as he had refuſed "the pardon of the criminal to the intreaties of his "friends, he would never grant to intereſt what he "had denied to friendſhip." This inflexibility had ſomething in it very heroical in a Prince, eſpecially as he thought the ſecret practicable. Auguſtus, upon hearing this ſtory, ſaid, "I am not ſurpriſed at the "King of Sweden's indifference about the philoſo-"pher's ſtone: he has found it in Saxony.

WHEN the Czar was informed of the ſtrange peace which Auguſtus had, notwithſtanding their former treaties, concluded at Altranſtad; and that Patkul, his Ambaſſador Plenipotentiary, was delivered up to the King of Sweden, in contempt of the laws of nations; he loudly complained of theſe indignities to the ſeveral Courts of Europe. He wrote to the Emperor of Germany, to the Queen of England, and to the States-General of the United Provinces. He gave the

the terms of cowardice and treachery to the ſad neceſſity, to which Auguſtus had been obliged to ſubmit. He conjured all theſe Powers to interpoſe their mediation to procure the reſtoration of his Ambaſſador, and to prevent the affront, which, in his perſon, was going to be offered to crowned heads. He preſſed them, by the motives of honour, not to debaſe themſelves ſo far as to become guarantees of the treaty of Altranſtad; a conceſſion which Charles XII. meant to extort from them by his threatening and imperious behaviour. Theſe letters had no other effect than to ſet the power of the King of Sweden in a ſtronger light. The Emperor, England, and Holland, were then engaged in a ruinous war with France, and judged it a very unſeaſonable juncture to exaſperate Charles XII. by refuſing the vain ceremony of being guarantees to a treaty. With regard to the unhappy Patkul, there was not a ſingle Power, which interpoſed its good offices in his behalf; from whence it appears what little confidence a ſubject ought to put in Princes, and how much all the Monarchs in Europe, at that time, ſtood in awe of the King of Sweden.

It was propoſed in the council of the Czar to retaliate this cruelty on the Swediſh Officers, who were priſoners at Muſcow; but the Czar would not conſent to a barbarity, which would have been attended with fatal conſequences, as there were more Muſcovites priſoners in Sweden, than Swedes in Muſcovy.

He

He ſtudied a more advantageous revenge. The main body of his enemy's army lay inactive in Saxony. Lewenhaupt, General of the King of Sweden, who was left in Poland with about twenty thouſand men, was not able to guard the paſſes into a country without forts, and full of factions. Staniſlaus was in the camp of Charles. The Emperor of Muſcovy ſeized this opportunity, and re-entered Poland with about 60,000 men. Theſe he divides into ſevera bodies, and marches with a flying camp to Leopold, where there was no Swediſh garriſon. All the towns of Poland yield to any one, who appears before their gates at the head of an army. He cauſed an Aſſembly to be convoked at Leopold, of much the ſame nature with that, which had dethroned Auguſtus at Warſaw.

Poland had at that time two Primates as well as two Kings; the one nominated by Auguſtus, the other by Staniſlaus. The Primate nominated by Auguſtus, ſummoned the Aſſembly of Leopold, to which they, whom that Prince had abandoned by the Peace of Altranſtad, and ſuch as were brought over by the money of the Czar, immediately repaired. Here it was propoſed to elect a new Sovereign; ſo that Poland was upon the point of having three Kings at once, without being able to ſay which was the real one.

During the conferences at Leopold, the Czar, whoſe intereſt was cloſely connected with that of the Emperor

Emperor of Germany, on account of the common dread, which they entertained of the power of the King of Sweden, ſecretly obtained from him a number of German Officers; who daily arriving, increaſed his ſtrength in a conſiderable degree, by bringing with them diſcipline and experience. Theſe he engaged in his ſervice by ſeveral inſtances of liberality; and the more to encourage his own troops, he gave his picture, ſet with diamonds, to all the General Officers and Colonels, who had fought at the battle of Caliſh: the ſubaltern Officers had medals of gold, and every private ſoldier a medal of ſilver. Theſe monuments of the victory of Caliſh were all ſtruck in the new city of Peterſburgh; where the improvement of the arts kept pace with the deſire of glory and ſpirit of emulation, which the Czar had inſtilled into his troops.

THE confuſion, the multiplicity of factions, and the continual ravages prevailing in Poland, hindered the Diet of Leopold from coming to any reſolution. The Czar therefore tranſferred it to Lublin. But the change of place did not leſſen the diſorder and perplexity in which the whole nation was involved. The Aſſembly contented itſelf with neither acknowledging Auguſtus, who had abdicated the throne, nor Staniſlaus, who had been elected againſt their will; but they were neither ſufficiently united, nor had reſolution enough to nominate another King. During theſe fruitleſs deliberations, the party of the Princes Sapieha,

Sapieha, that of Oginſky, thoſe who ſecretly adhered to Auguſtus, and the new ſubjects of Staniſlaus, all made war upon one other, plundered each other's eſtates, and completed the ruin of their country. The Swediſh troops commanded by Lewenhaupt, one part of which lay in Livonia, another in Lithuania, and a third in Poland, were daily in purſuit of the Ruſſians, and ſet fire to every thing that oppoſed Staniſlaus. The Ruſſians ruined their friends and foes without diſtinction; and nothing was to be ſeen but towns reduced to aſhes, and wandering troops of Poles, deprived of all their ſubſtance, and deteſting alike their two Kings, Charles XII. and the Czar of Muſcovy.

In order to quiet theſe commotions, and to ſecure the peaceable poſſeſſion of the throne, Staniſlaus ſet out from Altranſtad on the fifteenth of July, 1707, accompanied by General Renſchild, with ſixteen Swediſh regiments, and furniſhed with a large ſum of money. He was acknowledged wherever he came. The diſcipline of his throops, which made the barbarity of the Muſcovites to be more ſenſibly felt conciliated the affections of the people. His extreme affability, in proportion as it was better known, reconciled to him almoſt all the different factions; and his money procured him the greateſt part of the army of the crown. The Czar, apprehenſive of wanting proviſions, in a country which his troops had laid waſte, retired into Lithuania, where he had fixed the

the general rendezvous of his army, and where he reſolved to eſtabliſh magazines. This retreat left Staniſlaus the undiſturbed ſovereign of almoſt all Poland.

THE only perſon, who gave him any uneaſineſs was Count Siniauſky, Grand General of the Crown, by the nomination of Auguſtus. This man, who was poſſeſſed of no contemptible talents, and entertained the moſt ambitious views, was at the head of a third party. He neither acknowledged Auguſtus nor Staniſlaus; and, after having uſed his utmoſt efforts in order to procure his own election, contented himſelf with being the head of a party, ſince he could not be King. The troops of the Crown, which continued under his command, had no other pay but the liberty of pillaging their own country with impunity; and all thoſe who had either ſuffered, or were apprehenſive of ſuffering, from the rapacity of theſe free-booters, ſoon ſubmitted to Staniſlaus, whoſe power was gathering ſtrength every day.

THE King of Sweden was then in his camp at Altranſtad, receiving Ambaſſadors from almoſt all the Princes in Chriſtendom; ſome intreating him to quit the Empire, others deſiring him to turn his arms againſt the Emperor; and it was then the general report, that he intended to join with France in humbling the Houſe of Auſtria. Among theſe Ambaſſadors came the famous John Duke of Marlborough, on the part of

of Anne, Queen of Great Britian. This man, who never beſieged a town which he did not take, nor fought a battle which he did not gain, was at St. James's a perfect courtier, in parliament the head of a party, and in foreign countries the moſt able negociator of his time. He has done France as much miſchief by his politics as by his arms. Mr. Fagel, Secretary of the States-General, a man of the greateſt merit, has been heard to ſay, that when the States-General had more than once reſolved to oppoſe the ſchemes, which the Duke was about to lay before them, the Duke came, ſpoke to them in French, a language in which he expreſſed himſelf but very indifferently, and yet he brought them all over to his opinion. Of the truth of this ſtory Lord Bolingbroke aſſured me.

In conjunction with Prince Eugene, the companion of his victories, and Heinſius, the Grand Penſionary of Holland, he ſupported the whole weight of the war, which the Allies carried on againſt France. He knew that Charles was incenſed againſt the Empire and the Emperor; that he was ſecretly ſolicited by the French; and that if this conqueror ſhould eſpouſe the cauſe of Louis XIV. the Allies muſt be entirely ruined.

Charles indeed had given his word in 1700, that he would not intermeddle in the quarrel between Louis XIV. and the Allies; but the Duke of Marlborough could not believe that any Prince would be ſo

great a ſlave to his word, as not to ſacrifice it to his grandeur and intereſt. He therefore ſet out from the Hague with a reſolution to ſound the intentions of the King of Sweden. M. Fabricius, who then attended Charles XII. aſſured me, that the Duke of Marlborough, on his arrival, applied ſecretly, not to Count Piper, the Prime Miniſter, but to Baron de Gortz, who now began to ſhare with Piper the confidence of the King. He even went to the quarters of Charles XII. in the coach of this nobleman; where there paſſed ſome marks of coldneſs between the Duke and the Chancellor Piper; by whom, however, being afterwards preſented, together with Robinſon the Engliſh Miniſter, he ſpoke to the King in French. He told him, "that he ſhould eſteem it a ſingular "happineſs, to have an opportunity of learning under "his command ſuch parts of the art of war as he did "not yet underſtand." To this polite compliment the King made no return, and ſeemed to forget that it was Marlborough, who was ſpeaking to him. He even thought, as I have been told, that the dreſs of this great man was too much ſtudied, and that it had too little the air of a ſoldier. The converſation was tedious and embarraſſing, Charles XII. ſpeaking in the Swediſh tongue, and Robinſon ſerving as an interpreter, Marlborough, who was never in a haſte to make propoſals; and who, by a long courſe of experience, had learned the art of diving into the real characters of men, and diſcovering the connection between their moſt ſecret thoughts and their actions, geſtures,

geſtures, and diſcourſe, regarded the King with the utmoſt attention. When he ſpoke to him of war in general, he thought he perceived in his Majeſty a natural averſion to France; and remarked that he talked with pleaſure of the conqueſts of the Allies. He mentioned the Czar to him, and obſerved that his eyes always kindled at the name, notwithſtanding the calmneſs of the converſation. He remarked, beſides, a map of Muſcovy lying before him upon the table. He wanted no more to convince him that the real deſign and ſole ambition of the King of Sweden was to dethrone the Czar, as he had done the King of Poland. He was ſenſible that if Charles remained in Saxony, it was only to impoſe ſome hard conditions on the Emperor of Germany. He knew the Emperor could make no reſiſtance, and that thus all diſputes would be eaſily accommodated. He left Charles therefore to follow the bent of his own mind; and, ſatisfied with having diſcovered his intentions, made him no propoſals. Theſe particulars I had from the Ducheſs of Marlborough, his widow.

As few negociations are finiſhed without money, and as Miniſters are ſometimes known to ſell the hatred or favour of their maſters, it was the general opinion throughout Europe, that the Duke of Marlborough would not have ſucceeded ſo well with the King of Sweden, had he not made a handſome preſent to Count Piper, whoſe memory ſtill labours under the imputation. For my own part, after having traced this

this report to its ſource, with all the care and accuracy of which I am maſter, I found that Piper received a ſmall preſent from the Emperor, by the hands of the Count de Wratiſſau, with the conſent of his maſter, but nothing from the Duke of Marlborough. Certain it is, Charles was ſo firmly reſolved to dethrone the Emperor of Ruſſia, that he aſked nobody's advice on that ſubject, nor wanted the inſtigation of Count Piper to prompt him to wreak his long-meditated vengeance on the head of Peter Alexiowitz.

BUT what fully juſtifies the character of that Miniſter was, the honour, which, long after this period, was paid to his memory by Charles XII. who having heard that Piper was dead in Ruſſia, cauſed his body to be tranſported to Stockholm, and gave him a magnificent funeral at his own expence.

THE King, who had not as yet experienced any reverſe of fortune, nor even met with any interruption in his victories, thought one year would be ſufficient for dethroning the Czar; after which, he imagined he might return and ſet himſelf up as the arbiter of Europe. But, firſt of all, he reſolved to humble the Emperor of Germany.

BARON DE STRALENHEIM, the Swediſh Envoy at Vienna, had quarrelled at a public entertainment with the Count de Zobor, Chamberlain of the Emperor,

peror. The latter having refuſed to drink the health of Charles XII. and having declared that Prince had uſed his maſter very ill, Stralenheim gave him at once the lie, and a box on the ear; and, beſides this inſult, boldly demanded a reparation from the Imperial Court. The fear of diſpleaſing the King of Sweden obliged the Emperor to baniſh his ſubject, whom he ought rather to have avenged. Charles was not ſatisfied with this condeſcenſion, but inſiſted that Count Zobor ſhould be delivered up to him. The pride of the Court of Vienna was forced to ſtoop. The Count was put into the hands of the King, who ſent him back, after having detained him ſome time a priſoner at Stettin, He likewiſe further demanded, contrary to the law of nations, that they ſhould deliver up to him fifteen hundred unhappy Muſcovites, who, having eſcaped the fury of his arms, had fled into the Imperial territories. The Emperor was obliged to yield even to this ſtrange demand; and, had not the Ruſſian Envoy at Vienna dexterouſly given theſe unhappy wretches an opportunity of eſcaping by different roads, they muſt have been delivered into the hands of their enemies.

THE third and laſt of his demands was the moſt extraordinary. He declared himſelf the protector of the Emperor's Proteſtant ſubjects in Sileſia, a province belonging to the Houſe of Auſtria, not to the Empire. He inſiſted that the Emperor ſhould grant them the liberties and privileges, which had been eſtabliſhed

bliſhed by the treaties of Weſtphalia, but which were extinguiſhed, or at leaſt eluded, by thoſe of Ryſwick. The Emperor, who wanted only to get rid of ſuch a dangerous neighbour, yielded once more, and granted all he deſired. The Lutherans of Sileſia had above an hundred churches, which the Catholics were obliged to cede to them by this treaty: but of many of theſe advantages, which were now procured them by the King of Sweden's good fortune, they were afterwards deprived, when that Prince was no longer in a condition to impoſe laws.

The Emperor, who made theſe forced conceſſions, and complied in every thing with the will of Charles XII. was Joſeph, the eldeſt ſon of Leopold, and brother to Charles VI. who ſince ſucceeded him. The Pope's Inter-nuncio, who then reſided at the court of Joſeph, reproached him in very ſevere terms, alledging that it was a moſt ſhameful condeſcenſion for a Catholic Emperor, like him, to ſacrifice the intereſt of his own religion to that of hereticks. "You may "think yourſelf very happy," replied the Emperor, with a ſmile, "that the King of Sweden did not pro- "poſe to make me become a Lutheran; for if he had, "I do not know what I ſhould have done."

The Count de Wratiſſau, his Ambaſſador with Charles XII. brought to Leipſick the treaty in favour of the Sileſians, ſigned with his maſter's hand; upon which Charles ſaid, he was the Emperor's beſt friend.

He

He was far from being pleaſed, however, that the Court of Rome ſhould have employed all its arts and intrigues in order to traverſe his ſcheme. He looked with the utmoſt contempt upon the weakneſs of that Court; which, having one half of Europe for its irreconcileable enemy, and placing no confidence in the other, can only ſupport its credit by the fineſſe of its negociations; and yet he reſolved to be revenged on his Holineſs. He told the Count de Wratiſſau, that "the Swedes had formerly ſubdued Rome, and had "not degenerated like her." He ſent the Pope word, "that he would one day re-demand the effects which "Queen Chriſtina had left at Rome;" and it is hard to ſay how far this young conqueror might have carried his reſentment and his arms, had fortune favoured his deſigns. At that time nothing appeared impoſſible to him. He had even ſent ſeveral Officers privately into Aſia and Egypt, to take plans of the towns, and to examine into the ſtrength of thoſe countries. Certain it is, that if any one had been able to overturn the Empire of the Turks and Perſians, and afterwards to paſs into Italy, it had been Charles XII. He was as young as Alexander, as brave, as enterprizing, more indefatigable, more robuſt, and more virtuous; the Swedes alſo were perhaps better ſoldiers than the Macedonians. But ſuch projects, which are called divine when they ſucceed, are regarded only as chimerical when they fail of ſucceſs.

AT length having removed every difficulty, and accompliſhed all his deſigns; having humbled the Emperor, given laws in the Empire, protected the Lutheran religion in the midſt of the Catholics, dethroned one King and crowned another, and rendered himſelf the terror of all the Princes around him, he began to prepare for his departures. The pleaſure of Saxony, where he had remained inactive for a whole year, had not made the leaſt alteration in his manner of living. He rode out thrice a-day, roſe at four in the morning, dreſſed himſelf with his own hands, drank no wine, ſat at table only a quarter of an hour, exerciſed his troops every day, and knew no other pleaſure but that of making Europe tremble.

THE Swedes were ſtill ignorant whither their King intended to lead them. They had only a ſuſpicion that he meant to go to Moſcow. A few days before his departure, he ordered the Quarter-Maſter-General to give him in writing the route from Leipſick.—At that word he pauſed a moment; and, leſt the Quarter-maſter ſhould diſcover his project, he added, with a ſmile—to all the capital cities of Europe. The Quarter-maſter brought him a liſt of all theſe routes, at the head of which he placed, in great letters, "The route from "Leipſick to Stockholm." The generality of the Swedes were extremely deſirous of returning home; but the King was far from intending to lead them back to their native country. "Mr. Quarter-maſter," ſays he, "I plainly

"I plainly ſee whither you would lead me; but we "ſhall not return to Stockholm ſo ſoon."

THE army was already on its march, and was paſſing by Dreſden, when Charles, who was at the head of his men, always riding, as uſual, two or three hundred paces before his guards, all of a ſudden vaniſhed from their ſight. Some Officers advanced at full gallop to ſee where he was. They ran to all parts, but could not find him. In a moment the alarm was ſpread over the whole army. The troops where ordered to halt; the Generals aſſembled together, and were already in the utmoſt conſternation. At length, they learned from a Saxon, who was paſſing by, what was become of the King.

As he was paſſing ſo near Dreſden, he took it into his head to pay a viſit to Auguſtus. He entered the town on horſeback, followed by three or four General Officers. The centries of the gate aſked them their names. Charles ſaid his name was Carl, and that he was a Draban; and all the reſt took fictitious names. Count Fleming, ſeeing them paſs through the town, had only time to run and inform his maſter. All that could poſſibly be done on ſuch an occaſion immediately preſented itſelf to the mind of that Miniſter, who ſuggeſted it to Auguſtus. But Charles entered the Chamber in his boots, before Auguſtus had time to recover from his ſurprize. Auguſtus was then ſick, and in his night gown; but dreſſed himſelf in haſte. Charles breakfaſted with him, as a traveller, who comes to take

leave of his friend; and then expreſſed his deſire of viewing the fortifications. During the ſhort time he employed in walking round them, a Livonian, who had been condemned in Sweden, and now ſerved in the Saxon army, imagining that he could never find a more favourable opportunity of obtaining his pardon, entreated Auguſtus to aſk it of Charles; perſuading himſelf that his Majeſty would not refuſe ſo ſmall a favour to a Prince, from whom he had taken a Crown, and in whoſe power he now ſeemed to be. Auguſtus readily undertook to make the requeſt. He was then at ſome diſtance from the King, and was converſing with Hord, a Swediſh General. "I believe," ſaid he ſmiling. "your Maſter will not refuſe me." "You do not know him," replied General Hord; "he is more likely to refuſe you here than any-"where elſe." Auguſtus, however, did not fail to prefer the petition in very preſſing terms; and Charles refuſed it in ſuch a manner as to prevent a repetition of the requeſt. After having paſſed ſome hours in this ſtrange viſit, he embraced Auguſtus, and departed, Upon rejoining his army, he found all his Generals ſtill in conſternation. They told him they had determined to beſiege Dreſden, if his Majeſty had been detained priſoner. "Right," ſaid the King, "but they durſt not." Next day, upon hearing the news that Auguſtus held an extraordinary council at Dreſden, "You will find," ſaid Baron Stralenheim, "they are deliberating upon what they "ſhould have done yeſterday." A few days after Renſchild,

Renſchild, coming to wait upon the King, expreſſed his ſurpriſe at this unaccountable viſit to Auguſtus. "I confided," ſaid Charles, "in my good fortune; "but I have ſeen the moment that might have been "prejudicial to me. Fleming had no mind that I "ſhould leave Dreſden ſo ſoon.

BOOK

BOOK IV.

ARGUMENT.

Charles quits Saxony.—Purſues the Czar.—Penetrates into the Ukraine.—His Loſſes.—Is wounded.—The Battle of Pultowa.—Conſequences of that Battle.—Charles is forced to fly into Turkey.—His Reception in Beſſarabia.

CHARLES at length took leave of Saxony, in September 1707, at the head of an army of forty-three thouſand men, formerly covered with ſteel, but now ſhining with gold and ſilver, and enriched by the ſpoils of Poland and Saxony; every ſoldier carrying with him fifty crowns in ready money. The regiments were not only complete, but every company had ſeveral ſupernumeraries who waited for vacancies. Beſides this army, Count Lewenhaupt, one of his beſt Generals, waited for him in Poland with twenty thouſand men. He had alſo another army of fifteen thouſand in Finland; and freſh recruits were coming to him from Sweden. With all theſe forces it was not doubted but that he would dethrone the Czar.

THAT Emperor was at that time in Lithuania, endeavouring to reanimate a party, which Auguſtus appeared

peared to have abandoned. His troops, divided into ſeveral bodies, fled on all ſides, at the firſt news of the King of Sweden's approach. He had himſelf enjoined his Generals never to wait for this conqueror with unequal forces: and he was accordingly obeyed.

THE King of Sweden, in the midſt of his victorious march, received an Ambaſſador on the part of the Turks. This Ambaſſador had his audience in the tent of Count Piper, in which all viſits of ceremony were received. On theſe occaſions, this miniſter ſupported the dignity of his maſter, by the appearance of a little magnificence; while the King, who was always worſe lodged, worſe ſerved, and more plainly dreſſed than the meaneſt Officer in his army, uſed to ſay, that his palace was at Count Piper's. The Turkiſh Ambaſſador preſented Charles with a hundred Swediſh ſoldiers, who having been taken by the Calmucks, and ſold in Turkey, had been purchaſed by the Grand Seignior, who had ſent them back to the King, as the moſt acceptable preſent he could make him. Not that the Ottoman pride deigned to pay homage to the glory of Charles XII. but becauſe the Sultan, being the natural enemy of the Emperors of Ruſſia and Germany, was deſirous to fortify himſelf againſt them by the friendſhip of Sweden, and the alliance of Poland. The Ambaſſador complimented Staniſlaus upon his acceſſion to the throne; ſo that this King was, in a ſhort ſpace of time, acknowledged by Germany, France,

France, England, Spain, and Turkey. There remained only the Pope, who deferred the acknowledgment, till time ſhould have ſettled on his head a crown, of which a ſiniſter accident might deprive him.

CHARLES had ſcarce given audience to the Turkiſh Ambaſſador, before he went in purſuit of the Muſcovites. The Ruſſians had quitted Poland, and returned to it above twenty different times, during the courſe of the war. This country, which is open on all ſides, and has no fortreſſe to cut off the retreat of an army, gave the Muſcovites an opportunity of often reviſiting the very ſpot, where they had formerly been vanquiſhed, and even of penetrating as far into the heart of the kingdom as the vanquiſher. During Charles's ſtay in Saxony, the Czar had advanced as far as Leopold, ſituated at the ſouthern extremity of Poland; but was at this time at Grodno in Lithuania, an hundred leagues from Leopold,

CHARLES left Staniſlaus in Poland to defend his new kingdom, with the aſſiſtance of ten thouſand Swedes, and his own ſubjects, againſt his foreign and domeſtic enemies; while he put himſelf at the head of his cavalry, and marched, amidſt froſt and ſnow, to Grodno, in the month of January 1708.

HE had paſſed the Niemen, about two leagues from the town, before the Czar knew any thing of his march. Upon the firſt news of the arrival of the Swediſh

Swediſh army, however, the Czar quitted the town by the north gate, and Charles entered it by the ſouth; having only ſix hundred of his guards with him, the reſt not being able to keep pace with him. The Czar fled with above two thouſand men, apprehending that the whole army was entering Grodno. But being informed the ſame day, by a Poliſh deſerter, that he had abandoned the place to no more than ſix hundred men, and that the main body of the army was ſtill five leagues diſtant. he loſt no time in detaching fifteen hundred horſe of his own troops, in the evening, to ſurprize the King of Sweden in the town. This detachment, under favour of the darkneſs, arrived undiſcovered at the firſt Swediſh guard, which, though conſiſting only of thirty men, ſuſtained, for half a quarter of an hour, the efforts of the whole fifteen hundred. The King, who was at the other end of the town, flew to their aſſiſtance with the reſt of his ſix hundred guards; upon which the Ruſſians fled with precipitation. His army was not long in joining him, when he ſet out in purſuit of the enemy. All the Ruſſian troops diſperſed through Lithuania, retired haſtily to the eaſtward, into the Palatinate of Minſky, near the frontiers of Muſcovy, their general rendezvous. The Swedes, whom the King had likewiſe divided into ſeveral bodies, continued to purſue the enemy for more than thirty leagues. Both the purſued and the purſuers made forced marches almoſt every day, though in the middle of winter. Indeed all ſeaſons of the year had long become

become indifferent to the ſoldiers both of Charles and the Czar; the terror ſtruck by the name of King Charles, now making the only difference between the Ruſſians and the Swedes.

FROM Grodno to the Boriſthenes eaſtward, is a country of moraſſes, deſarts, and immenſe foreſts. Even in the cultivated ſpots there are no proviſions to be had, the peaſants burying their grain, and whatever elſe can be ſo preſerved, under ground. Theſe ſubterraneous ſtores were diſcoverable only by boring the earth with iron augers; the Muſcovites and the Swedes alternately making uſe of theſe proviſions: but they were not always to be found, and even then, were not ſufficient.

THE King of Sweden, who had foreſeen theſe difficulties, had provided biſcuit for the ſubſiſtence of his army, ſo that nothing could ſtop his march. After having traverſed the foreſt of Minſky, where he was conſtantly obliged to cut down the trees, to clear the road for his troops and baggage, he found himſelf, on the 25th of June 1708, on the banks of the river Berezine, oppoſite to Boriſlow.

THE Czar had in this place aſſembled the beſt part of his forces, and intrenched himſelf to great advantage; his deſign being to hinder the Swedes from croſſing the river. Charles poſted ſome regiments on the banks of the Berezine, over againſt Boriſlow, as if he meant to attempt a paſſage in the face of the enemy. At the ſame time marching his army three leagues

leagues higher up the river, he threw a bridge acroſs it, cut his way through a body of three thouſand men, who defended that paſs, and, without halting, marched on toward the main body of the enemy. The Ruſſians did not wait his approach, but decamped, and retreated towards the Boriſthenes, breaking up the roads, and deſtroying every thing in their way, in order to retard the purſuit of the Swedes.

CHARLES ſurmounted all theſe obſtacles, and advanced towards the Boriſthenes. He was oppoſed in his march by twenty thouſand Muſcovites, intrenched at a place called Holloſin, behind a moraſs, which could not be approached without paſſing a river. Charles did not delay the attack till the reſt of his infantry ſhould arrive, but plunged into the water at the head of his guards, and croſſed the river and the moraſs, the water frequently reaching above his ſhoulders. While he was thus preſſing forward to the enemy, he ordered his cavalry to go round the moraſs, and attack them in flank. The Muſcovites, aſtoniſhed that no barrier could defend them, were inſtantly routed by the King, who attacked them on foot with his guards, and by the Swediſh cavalry.

THESE, having forced their way through the enemy, joined the King in the midſt of the battle. He then mounted on horſeback; but obſerving ſoon after a young Swediſh gentleman, named Gullenſtiern, for whom he had a great regard, wounded, and unable to walk, he obliged him to take his horſe, and continued to command on foot at the head of his infantry. Of

all the battles he had fought, this was perhaps the moſt glorious; being that in which he encountered the greateſt dangers, and diſplayed the moſt conſummate ſkill and prudence. The memory of it is ſtill preſerved by a medal, with this inſcription on one ſide, *Silvæ, Paludes, Aggeres, Hoſtes victi:* on the reverſe the following verſe of Lucan, *Victrices copias alium laturus in Orbem.*

THE Ruſſians, thus driven from their poſts, repaſſed the Boriſthenes, which divides Poland from Muſcovy. But this did not induce Charles to give over the purſuit; who followed them acroſs that great river, which he paſſed at Mohilow, the laſt town of Poland, and which alternately belongs to the Poles and to the Ruſſians; the uſual fate of frontier towns.

THE Czar ſeeing his Empire, in which he had lately eſtabliſhed the polite arts and a flouriſhing trade, thus expoſed to a war, which, in a ſhort time, might overturn all his mighty projects, and perhaps deprive him of his crown, began to think ſeriouſly of peace; and accordingly ventured to make ſome propoſals to that purpoſe by a Poliſh gentleman, whom he ſent to the Swediſh army. Charles, who had not been accuſtomed to make peace with his enemies, except in their own capitals, replied, "I will treat with the Czar at Moſcow." When this haughty anſwer was reported to the Czar, he ſaid, "My brother Charles always "affects to play the part of Alexander; but I flatter "myſelf he will not find in me another Darius."

FROM

FROM Mohilow, where the King paſſed the Boriſthenes, as you advance towards the north, about thirty leagues along the banks of that river, ſtill on the frontiers of Poland and Muſcovy, you enter the country of Smolenſko, through which lies the great road that leads from Poland to Muſcovy. This way the Czar directed his flight; and the King purſued him by long marches; ſo that part of the Ruſſian rear-guard was frequently engaged with the dragoons of the vanguard of the Swedes. The latter had generally the advantage, but they were weakened even by victory in theſe ſmall ſkirmiſhes, which were never deciſive, and in which they conſtantly loſt a number of men.

ON the 22d of September 1708, the King attacked a body of ten thouſand horſe, and ſix thouſand Calmucks, near Smolenſko.

THE Calmucks are Tartars, living between the kingdom of Aſtracan, ſubject to the Czar, and that of Samarcand, belonging to the Uſbeck Tartars, and the country of Timur, known by the name of Tamerlane. The country of the Calmucks extends eaſtward to the mountains, which divide the dominions of the Mogul from the weſtern parts of Aſia.

THE inhabitants of that part of the country, which borders upon Aſtracan, are tributary to the Czar, who lays claim to an abſolute authority over them; but their vagrant life hinders him from making it good, and

and obliges him to treat them in the ſame manner in which the grand Seignior treats the Arabs: ſometimes conniving at, and ſometimes puniſhing their depredations. There are always ſome of theſe Calmucks in the Ruſſian army; and the Czar had even reduced them to a regular diſcipline, like the reſt of his ſoldiers.

KING CHARLES attacked theſe troops with only ſix regiments of horſe and four thouſand foot; broke the Muſcovites at the first onſet, at the head of his regiment of Oſtrogothia, and obliged them to fly. He purſued them through rugged and hollow ways, where the Calmucks awhile concealing themſelves, ſoon re-appeared, and cut off the regiment, at the head of which the King fought, from the reſt of the Swediſh army. The Ruſſians and Calmucks jointly ſurrounded this regiment, and forced their way even to the King's perſon. Two Aids-de-camp, fighting near him, fell at his feet. The King's horſe was killed under him; and as one of his Equerries was preſenting him with another, both the Equerry and horſe were ſhot dead upon the ſpot. Charles then fought on foot, ſurrounded by his Officers, who inſtantly flocked around him.

MANY of them were taken, wounded, or ſlain, or puſhed to a great diſtance from the King by the crowds that aſſailed them; ſo that he was ſoon left with no more than five attendants. With his own hand he had killed above twelve of the enemy, without

out receiving a ſingle wound; owing to that ſurprizing good fortune, which had hitherto attended him, and upon which he conſtantly relied. At length, a Colonel named Dardof broke his way through the Calmucks, and with a ſingle company of his regiment arrived time enough to ſave the King. The reſt of the Swedes put the Tartars to the ſword. The army recovered its ranks; Charles mounted his horſe, and, fatigued as he was, purſued the Ruſſians for two leagues.

The Conqueror was ſtill in the great road to the capital of Muſcovy. But the diſtance from Smolenſko, near which the battle was fought, to Moſcow, is about an hundred French leagues; and the army began to be in want of proviſions. Count Piper earneſtly entreated the King to wait till General Lewenhaupt, who was bringing him ſupplies, together with a reinforcement of fifteen thouſand men, ſhould arrive. The King, who ſeldom indeed took counſel of any, not only rejected this wholeſome advice, but, to the great aſtoniſhment of all the army, quitted the road to Moſcow, and began to march ſouthward towards the Ukraine, the country of the Coſſacks, lying between Little Tartary, Poland, and Muſcovy. This country extends above an hundred French leagues from north to ſouth, and almoſt as many from eaſt to weſt. It is divided into two parts, nearly equal, by the Boriſthenes, which runs from the north-weſt to the ſouth-

ſouth-eaſt. The chief town is Bathurin, ſituated upon the little river Sem. The moſt northern Part of the Ukraine is rich and well cultivated. The ſouthern-moſt, lying in the forty-eighth degree of latitude, is one of the moſt fertile countries in the world, and yet one of the moſt deſolate. Its wretched form of government ſtifles in embryo all the bleſſings, which nature, if properly encouraged, would bring forth for the inhabitants. The people of theſe cantons indeed neither ſow nor plant, becauſe the Tartars of Budziack, Precop, and Moldavia, being all of them free-booters and banditti, would rob them of their harveſts.

THE Ukraine hath always aſpired after liberty; but being ſurrounded by Muſcovy, the States of the Grand Seignior, and by Poland, it has been obliged to chuſe a Protector, and conſequently a Maſter, in one of theſe three States. The inhabitants at firſt put themſelves under the protection of the Poles, who treated them too much like vaſſals. They afterwards ſubmitted to the Ruſſians, who governed them with as deſpotic a ſway. They had originally the privilege of electing a Prince under the name of General; but they were ſoon deprived of that right; and their General was nominated by the Court of Moſcow.

THE perſon who then filled the ſtation was a Poliſh gentleman, named Mazeppa, born in the Palatinate of Podolia. He had been educated as Page to John Caſimir,

ſimir, and had received ſome tincture of polite learning in his court. An intrigue, which he had had in his youth with the lady of a Poliſh Gentleman, having been diſcovered, the huſband cauſed him to be whipped with rods, to be bound, ſtark naked, upon a wild horſe, and turned a-drift in that condition. The horſe, which had been brought out of the Ukraine, returned to his own country, and carried Mazeppa with him, half-dead with hunger and fatigue. Some of the country-people gave him aſſiſtance; and he lived among them for a long time, ſignaliſing himſelf in ſeveral excurſions againſt the Tartars. The ſuperiority of his knowledge gained him great reſpect among the Coſſacks; and his reputation greatly increaſing, the Czar found it neceſſary to make him Prince of the Ukraine.

Being one day at table with the Czar at Moſcow, the Emperor propoſed to him the taſk of diſciplining the Coſſacks, and rendering them more docile and dependant. Mazeppa replied, that the ſituation of the Ukraine, and the genius of the nation, were inſuperable obſtacles to ſuch a ſcheme. The Czar, who began to be over-heated with wine, and had not, when ſober, always the command of his paſſions, called him a traitor, and threatened to have him impaled.

Mazeppa, on his return to the Ukraine, formed the deſign of a revolt; the execution of which was greatly facilitated by the Swediſh army, that ſoon after appeared

peared on the frontiers. He reſolved to render himſelf independent, and to erect the Ukraine, with ſome other ruins of the Ruſſian Empire, into a powerful kingdom. Brave, enterprizing, and indefatigable, he entered ſecretly into a league with the King of Sweden, to accelerate the ruin of the Czar, and to convert it to his own advantage.

The King appointed a rendezvous near the river Deſna, where Mazeppa promiſed to meet him at the head of thirty thouſand men, with ammunition and proviſions, together with all his treaſures, which were immenſe. The Swediſh army therefore continued its march on that ſide, to the great regret of all the Officers, who knew nothing of the King's treaty with the Coſſacks. In the mean time Charles ſent orders to Lewenhaupt to bring his troops and proviſions with all poſſible diſpatch into the Ukraine, where he propoſed to paſs the winter, that having once ſecured that country, he might the more eaſily conquer Muſcovy in the enſuing ſpring. He continued ſtill to advance towards the river Deſna, which falls into the Boriſthenes at Kiow.

The obſtructions the troops had hitherto encountered in their march were but trifling, in compariſon of what they met with in this new route. They were obliged to croſs a marſhy foreſt fifty leagues in length. General Lagercron, who led the way with five thouſand ſoldiers and pioneers, miſled the army thirty leagues

leagues too far to the eaſt; nor did the King diſcover the miſtake till after a tireſome march of four days. With difficulty they regained the right road: but almoſt all their artillery and waggons were loſt, being either ſtuck faſt, or entirely ſunk in the moraſs.

AFTER a march of twelve days, attended with many vexatious and untoward circumſtances, during which they had conſumed the ſmall quantity of biſcuit that was left, the army, exhauſted with hunger and fatigue, arrived on the banks of the Deſna; the very ſpot which Mazeppa had marked out as a place of rendezvous; but inſtead of meeting with that Prince, they found a body of Muſcovites advancing towards the other ſide of the river. The King was aſtoniſhed, but reſolved immediately to paſs the Deſna, and attack the enemy. The banks of the river were ſo ſteep, that the ſoldiers were obliged to deſcend to the water with ropes. They croſſed it in their uſual manner, ſome on floats, which were made in haſte, and others by ſwimming. The body of Muſcovites, which arrived at the ſame time, did not exceed eight thouſand men; ſo that it made but little reſiſtance, and this obſtacle was alſo ſurmounted.

CHARLES advanced farther into this deſolate country, alike uncertain of his route, and of Mazeppa's fidelity. That Coſſack appeared at laſt, but rather like a fugitive than a powerful ally. The Muſcovites had diſcovered and defeated his deſign; they had

fallen upon the Coſſacks and cut them in pieces. His principal friends being taken ſword in hand, had, to the number of thirty, been broken on the wheel; his towns were reduced to aſhes; his treaſures plundered; the proviſions he was preparing for the King of Sweden ſeized; and it was with great difficulty that he himſelf made his eſcape with ſix thouſand men, and ſome horſes laden with gold and ſilver. He gave the King nevertheleſs, ſome hopes that he ſhould be able to aſſiſt him by his intelligence in that unknown country, and by the affection of the Coſſacks, who, being enraged againſt the Ruſſians, flocked to the camp, and ſupplied the army with proviſions.

CHARLES hoped at leaſt that General Lewenhaupt would come and repair this misfortune. He was to bring with him about fifteen thouſand Swedes, who were better than an hundred thouſand Coſſacks, together with ammunition and proviſions. At length he arrived, in much the ſame condition with Mazeppa.

HE had already paſſed the Boriſthenes above Mohilow, and advanced twenty leagues beyond it, on the road to the Ukraine. He was bringing the King a convoy of eight thouſand waggons, with the money which he had levied in his march through Lithuania. He no ſooner approached the town of Leſno, near the conflux of the rivers Pronia and Soſſa, which fall into the Boriſthenes at a great diſtance beneath it, than the

the Czar appeared at the head of near forty thouſand men.

THE Swediſh General, who had not ſixteen thouſand complete, diſdained however the defence of intrenchments. A long train of victories had inſpired the Swedes with ſo much confidence, that they never informed themſelves of the number of their enemies, but only of the place where they were. Accordingly on the ſeventh of October 1708, in the afternoon, Lewenhaupt, without heſitation, advanced againſt him. In the firſt attack the Swedes killed fifteen hundred Ruſſians. The Czar's army was thrown into confuſion, and fled on all ſides. The Emperor of Ruſſia ſaw himſelf upon the point of being entirely defeated. He was ſenſible that the ſafety of his dominions depended upon the ſucceſs of this day, and that he muſt be utterly ruined, ſhould Lewenhaupt join the King of Sweden with a victorious army.

THE moment he ſaw his troops begin to give way, he flew to the rear guard, where the Coſſacks and Calmucks were poſted. "I charge you," ſaid he, "to fire upon every one that runs away, even on "me myſelf, ſhould I be ſo cowardly as to fly." Returning then to the van, he rallied his troops himſelf, aſſiſted by the Princes Menzikoff and Gallitzin. Lewenhaupt, who had received ſtrict orders to rejoin his maſter, choſe rather to continue his march than renew the battle, imagining he had done enough to prevent the enemy from purſuing him.

NEXT

NEXT morning, about eleven o'clock, the Czar attacked him upon the border of the moraſs, and extended his lines with a view to ſurround him. The Swedes faced about on all ſides, and the battle was maintained with equal obſtinacy. The loſs of the Muſcovites was three times greater than that of the Swedes; the former ſtill kept their ground, and the victory was left undecided.

AT four in the afternoon General Baver brought the Czar a reinforcement of troops. The battle was then renewed for the third time with more eagerneſs than ever, and laſted till night; when, at length, ſuperior numbers prevailed; the Swedes were broken, routed, and driven back to their baggage. Lewenhaupt rallied his troops behind the waggons. The Swedes were conquered, but diſdained to fly. They were ſtill about nine thouſand in number, and not ſo much as one of them deſerted. The General drew them up in order of battle with as much eaſe as if they had not been defeated. The Czar, on the other ſide, remained all night under arms, and forbade his Officers under pain of being caſhiered, and his ſoldiers under pain of death, to leave their ranks in order to plunder.

NEXT morning, at day-break, he ordered a freſh aſſault. Mean time Lewenhaupt had retired to an advantageous ſituation at the diſtance of a few miles, after having nailed up part of his cannon, and ſet fire to his baggage waggons.

THE

THE Muſcovites arrived time enough to prevent the whole convoy from being conſumed by the flames. They ſeized about ſix thouſand carriages, which they ſaved. The Czar, deſirous of compleating the defeat of the Swedes, ſent one of his Generals, named Phlug, to attack them again for the fifth time. That General offered them an honourable capitulation. Lewenhaupt refuſed it, and fought a fifth battle, as bloody as any of the former. Of the nine thouſand ſoldiers he had left, he loſt about one half, the other remained unbroken. At length night coming on, the Swediſh General, after having ſuſtained five battles againſt forty thouſand men, paſſed the Soſſa with about five thouſand ſoldiers that remained. The Czar loſt about ten thouſand men in theſe five engagements, in which he had the glory of conquering the Swedes; and Lewenhaupt that of diſputing the victory for three days, and of effecting a retreat without having been forced in his laſt poſt. Thus he arrived at his maſter's camp, with the honour of having ſo bravely defended himſelf, but bringing with him neither ammunition nor army.

THE King of Sweden thus found himſelf deſtitute of proviſions, cut off from all communication with Poland, and ſurrounded with enemies, in the heart of a country where he had no other reſource than his own courage,

IN

In this extremity, the memorable winter of 1709, which was ſtill more ſevere in that part of Europe than in France, deſtroyed numbers of his troops; for Charles reſolved to brave the ſeaſons, as he had done his enemies, and ventured to make long marches during this mortal cold. It was in one of theſe marches, that two thouſand men fell down dead with cold, almoſt before his eyes. The dragoons had no boots, and the infantry were without ſhoes, and almoſt without clothes. They were forced to make ſtockings of the ſkins of wild beaſts, in the beſt manner they could, and they were frequently in want of bread. They had been obliged to throw almoſt all their cannon into the marſhes and rivers, for want of horſes to draw them; ſo that this once flouriſhing army was reduced to twenty-four thouſand men ready to periſh with hunger. They no longer received any advices from Sweden, nor were able to ſend any thither. In this condition only one Officer complained. "What," ſaid the King to him, "are you uneaſy at being ſo far "from your wife? If you are a true ſoldier, I will "lead you to ſuch a diſtance, that you ſhall hardly "be able to hear from Sweden once in three years."

The Marquis de B***, afterwards Ambaſſador in Sweden, told me, that a ſoldier ventured, in preſence of the whole army, to preſent to the King, with an air of complaint, a piece of bread that was black and mouldy, made of barley and oats, which was the only food they then had, and of which they had not even a ſufficiency

ſufficiency. The King received the piece of bread without the leaſt emotion, eat every morſel of it, and then coolly ſaid to the ſoldier, "It is not good, but "it may be eaten." This incident, trifling as it is, if indeed any thing that increaſes reſpect and confidence can be called trifling, contributed more than all the reſt to make the Swediſh army ſupport thoſe hardſhips, which would have been intolerable under any other General.

In this ſituation he at laſt received news from Stockholm; but they brought only advice of the death of his ſiſter, the Ducheſs of Holſtein, who was carried off by the ſmall-pox, in the month of December 1708, in the twenty-ſeventh year of her age. She was a Princeſs as mild and gentle, as her brother was imperious in his diſpoſition, and implacable in his revenge. He had always entertained a great affection for her; and was the more afflicted with her death, as, now beginning to taſte of misfortunes himſelf, he was of courſe become a little more ſuſceptible.

He was alſo informed, that money and troops had been raiſed in Sweden, agreeably to his orders; but nothing could reach his camp, as between him and Stockholm there were near five hundred leagues to march, and an enemy ſuperior in number to engage.

The Czar, who was as active as the King, after having ſent freſh troops to the aſſiſtance of the Confederates

ates of Poland, who, under the command of General Siniauſki, exerted their joint efforts againſt Staniſlaus, immediately advanced into the Ukraine, in the midſt of this ſevere winter, to make head againſt the King of Sweden. He continued to purſue the political ſcheme he had formed of weakening his enemies by petty rencounters, wiſely judging that the Swediſh army muſt in the end be entirely ruined, as it could not poſſibly be recruited. The cold muſt certainly have been very ſevere, as it obliged the two Monarchs to agree to a ſuſpenſion of arms. But on the firſt of February they renewed their military operations, in the midſt of froſt and ſnow.

After ſeveral ſlight ſkirmiſhes and ſome loſſes, the King perceived, in the month of April, that he had only eighteen thouſand Swedes remaining. Mazeppa alone, the Prince of the Coſſacks, ſupplied them with proviſions, without which aſſiſtance the army muſt have periſhed with cold and hunger. At this conjuncture the Czar made propoſals to Mazeppa, to return again under his authority. But whether it was, that the terrible puniſhment of the wheel, by which his friends had periſhed, made the Coſſack apprehend the ſame danger for himſelf, or that he was deſirous of revenging their deaths, he continued faithful to his new ally.

Charles, with his eighteen thouſand Swedes, had neither loſt the deſign nor the hope of penetrating to Moſcow. He therefore towards the end of May laid

laid ſiege to Pultowa, upon the river Vorſka, at the eaſtern extremity of the Ukraine, and more than thirteen leagues from the Boriſthenes. This country is inhabited by the Zaporavians, the moſt extraordinary people on the earth. They are a collection of ancient Ruſſians, Poles, and Tartars, profeſſing a ſpecies of Chriſtianity, and exerciſing a kind of free-booting, reſembling that of the Buccaneers. They elect a Chief, whom they frequently depoſe or ſtrangle. They ſuffer no woman to live among them, but carry off all the children for twenty or thirty leagues around, and bring them up to their own manners. In the ſummer, they always live in the open fields; in the winter, they ſhelter themſelves in large barns, which contain four or five hundred men. They fear nothing, live free, and brave death for the ſmalleſt booty, with the ſame intrepidity as Charles XII. did, in order to obtain the power of beſtowing crowns. The Czar gave them ſixty thouſand florins, in the hope to engage them in his intereſt. They took his money, but, through the intrigues of Mazeppa, immediately declared in favour of Charles; though their ſervice was of very little conſequence; as they eſteem it a folly to fight for any thing but plunder. It was no ſmall advantage, however, that they were prevented from doing harm. The number of their troops was at moſt but about two thouſand. Ten of their Chiefs were preſented, one morning, to the King; but they had great difficulty to prevail on them to remain ſober, as they commonly begin the day by getting drunk.

They were brought to the intrenchments, where they ſhewed their dexterity in firing with long carbines; for being placed upon the mounds, they killed, at the diſtance of ſix hundred paces, ſuch of the enemy as were pointed out. To theſe banditti Charles added ſeveral thouſand Walachians, whom he had hired from the Cham of Little Tartary. He then laid ſiege to Pultowa with all theſe troops of Zaporavians, Coſſacks. and Walachians; which, joined to his eighteen thouſand Swedes, made up an army of about thirty thouſand men, but an army in a wretched condition, and in want of every thing. The Czar had formed a magazine in Pultowa, which, if the King had taken, he would have opened himſelf a way to Moſcow; and have been able at leaſt, amidſt the great abundance he would then have poſſeſſed, to wait the arrival of the ſuccours which he ſtill expected from Sweden, Livonia, Pomerania, and Poland. His only reſource, therefore, being in the conqueſt of Pultowa, he preſſed the ſiege of it with great ardour. Mazeppa, who carried on a correſpondence in that town, aſſured him that he would ſoon be maſter of it. This hope re-animated the whole army; for the ſoldiers conſidered the taking of Pultowa as the end of all their miſeries.

The King perceived, from the beginning of the ſiege, that he had taught his enemies the art of war; for, in ſpite of all his precautions, Prince Menzikoff threw ſuccours into the town; by which means the garriſon

garriſon was ſtrong, to the number of almoſt five thouſand men.

THEY made ſeveral ſallies, and ſometimes with ſucceſs: they likewiſe ſprung mines; but what rendered the town impregnable was the approach of the Czar, who advanced with ſeventy thouſand men. Charles went to reconnoitre them on the twenty-ſeventh of May, the day of his birth, and beat one of their detachments; but as he was returning to his camp, he received a ſhot from a carbine, which pierced his boot, and ſhattered the bone of his heel. There was not the leaſt alteration obſervable in his countenance, from which it could be ſuſpected that he was wounded; he continued to give orders with great compoſure, and after this accident remained near ſix hours on horſeback. One of his domeſtics obſerving that the ſole of the King's boot was covered with blood, ran to call the ſurgeons; and the pain was now become ſo exquiſite, that they were obliged to aſſiſt him in diſmounting, and to carry him into his tent. The ſurgeons examined the wound, and were of opinion that the leg muſt be cut off. The conſternation of the army on this occaſion was inexpreſſible, till one of the ſurgeons named Newman, who had more ſkill and courage than the reſt, affirmed that by making deep inciſions he could ſave the King's leg. "Fall to work then preſently," ſaid the King to him, "cut boldly, and fear nothing." He himſelf held his leg with both his hands, and beheld the

the inciſions that were made in it, as if the operation had been performed upon another perſon.

WHILE they were laying on the dreſſings, he ordered an aſſault to be made the next day; but he had hardly given this order, before he was informed that the whole army of the enemy was advancing againſt him. It became then neceſſary to alter his meaſures. Charles, wounded and incapable of acting, ſaw himſelf ſituated between the Boriſthenes and the river that runs to Pultowa, in a deſart country, without any places of ſecurity, without ammunition, and in the face of an army, which at once cut off his retreat, and prevented his being ſupplied with proviſions. In this extremity he did not aſſemble a council of war, as has been publiſhed in ſome other accounts, but on the night between the ſeventh and eight of July, he ſent for Velt-Mareſchal Renſchild into his tent, and without deliberation, or the leaſt diſcompoſure, ordered him to make the neceſſary diſpoſitions for attacking the Czar next day. Renſchild made no objections, and went to carry his orders into execution. At the door of the King's tent he met Count Piper, with whom he had had a miſunderſtanding for ſome time, which frequently happens between the Miniſter and the General. Piper aſked him if he had any news. "No," ſaid the General coldly, and paſſed on to give his orders. As ſoon as Count Piper had entered the tent. "Has Renſchild told you no-"thing?" ſaid the King. "Nothing," anſwered Piper,

Piper. "Well, then, I will tell you," replied the King: "To-morrow we ſhall give battle." Count Piper was terrified at ſo deſperate a reſolution: but as he well knew it was impoſſible to make his maſter change his mind, he expreſſed his ſurprize only by his ſilence, and left Charles to ſleep till break of day.

It was on the 8th of July 1709 that the deciſive battle of Pultowa was fought between the two moſt extraordinary Monarchs that were then in the world: Charles XII. illuſtrious from nine years of victories; Peter Alexiowitz from nine years of labours, taken to form troops equal to thoſe of Sweden; the one glorious for having given away dominions; the other for having civilized his own; Charles fond of dangers, and fighting for glory alone; Alexiowitz not avoiding dangers, and making war only for advantage; the Swediſh Monarch liberal from greatneſs of ſoul; the Muſcovite never giving, but with ſome deſign; the one, maſter of a continence and ſobriety beyond example, of a magnanimous diſpoſition, and never cruel but once; the other not having yet diveſted himſelf from the barbariſm of his education and of his country, as much the object of terror to his ſubjects, as of admiration to ſtrangers, and too prone to exceſſes, which even ſhortened his days. Charles bore the title of "Invincible," of which a ſingle moment might deprive him: the neighbouring nations had given Peter Alexiowitz the name of "Great," which,

as

as he did not owe it to his victories, he could not loſe by a defeat.

To have a diſtinct idea of this battle, and the place where it was fought, we muſt figure to ourſelves Pultowa on the north, the camp of the King of Sweden on the ſouth, ſtretching a little towards the eaſt, his baggage about a mile behind him, and the river of Pultowa on the north of the town, running from eaſt to weſt.

The Czar had paſſed the river about a league from Pultowa, towards the weſt, and was beginning to form his camp.

At break of day the Swedes appeared before the trenches with four iron cannon, which was the whole artillery; the reſt were left in the camp, with about three thouſand men, and four thouſand remained with the baggage; ſo that the Swediſh army, which advanced againſt the enemy, conſiſted of about one and twenty thouſand men, of which there were about ſixteen thouſand Swedes.

The Generals Renſchild, Roos, Lewenhaupt, Schlippenback, Hoorn, Sparre, Hamilton, the Prince of Wirtemberg the King's relation, and ſome others, the greateſt part of whom had ſeen the battle of Narva, put the ſubaltern Officers in mind of that day, wherein eight thouſand Swedes defeated an army of eighty

eighty thouſand Muſcovites in their intrenchments. The Officers exhorted the ſoldiers by the ſame motive, every one encouraging each other in the march.

THE King, carried in a litter at the head of his infantry, conducted the march. A party of the cavalry advanced by his order to attack that of the enemy; and the battle began with this engagement at half an hour paſt four in the morning. The enemy's cavalry was poſted towards the weſt, on the right ſide of the Ruſſian camp. Prince Menzikoff and Count Gallowin had placed them at certain diſtances between redoubts lined with cannon. General Schlipenback, at the head of the Swedes, ruſhed upon this body of cavalry. All thoſe who have ſerved in the Swediſh troops, know that it is almoſt impoſſible to withſtand the fury of their firſt attack. The Muſcovite ſquadrons were broken and routed. The Czar, who ran up to rally them in perſon, had his hat pierced with a muſket ball; Menzikoff had three horſes killed under him; the Swedes cried out "Victory!"

CHARLES did not doubt but that the battle was gained: he had ſent in the middle of the night General Creuts, with five thouſand horſe or dragoons, who were to take the enemy in flank, while he attacked them in the front; but, as his ill fortune would have it, Creuts miſtook his way, and did not appear. The Czar who thought he was ruined, had time to rally his cavalry. He now in his turn fell upon that of

of the King, which, not being ſupported by the detachment of Creuts, was broken in its turn. Schlipenback was taken priſoner in this engagement. At the ſame time ſeventy-two pieces of cannon played from the camp upon the Swediſh cavalry; and the Ruſſian infantry, opening their lines, advanced to attack that of Charles.

THE Czar now detached Prince Menzikoff to go and poſt himſelf between Pultowa and the Swedes. Prince Menzikoff executed his maſter's orders with dexterity and expedition; and not only cut off the communication between the Swediſh army and the camp before Pultowa, but having met with a corps de reſerve of three thouſand men, he ſurrounded them and cut them to pieces. If Menzikoff performed this exploit of his own accord, Ruſſia owes its preſervation to him: if it were by the order of the Czar, he was an adverſary worthy of Charles XII. Mean while the Ruſſian infantry came out of their lines, and advanced into the plain in order of battle. On the other hand, the Swediſh cavalry rallied within a quarter of a league from the enemy; and the King, aſſiſted by Velt-Mareſchal Renſchild, made the neceſſary diſpoſition for a general engagement.

HE ranged the remainder of his troops in two lines, his infantry occupying the centre, and his cavalry the two wings. The Czar diſpoſed his army in the ſame manner; he, however, had the advantage of numbers,

numbers, and of ſeventy-two pieces of cannon, while the Swedes had no more than four to oppoſe him, and began to be in want of powder.

THE Emperor of Muſcovy was in the centre of his army, having then only the title of Major-General, and ſeemed to obey General Zeremetoff. But he rode from rank to rank in the character of Emperor, mounted on a Turkiſh horſe, which was a preſent from the Grand Seignior, animating the captains and ſoldiers, and promiſing rewards to them all.

AT nine in the morning the battle was renewed. One of the firſt diſcharges of the Ruſſian cannon carried off the two horſes of Charles's litter. He cauſed two others to be put to it. A ſecond diſcharge broke the litter in pieces, and overturned the King. Of four and twenty Drabants, who relieved each other in carrying him, one-and-twenty were killed. The Swedes, ſtruck with conſternation, began to ſtagger; and the cannon of the enemy continuing to mow them down, the firſt line fell back upon the ſecond, and the ſecond began to fly. In this laſt action it was only one line of ten thouſand Ruſſian infantry that routed the whole Swediſh army; ſo much were matters changed!

ALL the Swediſh writers affirm, that they would have gained the battle, if they had not committed ſeveral blunders; but all the officers pretend, that it was a great error to give battle at all, and a greater

ſtill to ſhut themſelves up in a deſart country, againſt the advice of the moſt prudent Generals, in oppoſition to a warlike enemy, three times ſtronger than Charles, both in number of men, and the many reſources from which the Swedes were entirely cut off. The remembrance of Narva was the principal cauſe of Charles's misfortune at Pultowa.

The Prince of Wirtemberg, General Renſchild, and ſeveral principal Officers, were already made priſoners; the camp before Pultowa was ſtormed; and all was thrown into a confuſion, againſt which they had no remedy, Count Piper, with ſome Officers of the Chancery, had left the camp, and neither knew what to do, nor what was become of the King, but ran about from one corner of the field of battle to the other. A Major, named Bere, offered to conduct them to the baggage; but the clouds of duſt and ſmoke which covered the country, and the confuſion of mind ſo natural amidſt ſuch conſternation, brought them directly to the counterſcarp of the town, where they were all made priſoners by the garriſon.

The King refuſed to fly, and was unable to defend himſelf. It was at this inſtant that General Poniatowſky happened to be near him, Colonel of Staniſlaus's Poliſh guards, a man of extraordinary merit, who had been induced, from his attachment to the perſon of Charles, to follow him into the Ukraine, without poſſeſſing any command. He was a man, who, in all

all the occurrences of life, and amidſt thoſe dangers, in which others would at moſt have diſplayed their courage, always took his reſolution with diſpatch, prudence, and ſucceſs. He made a ſign to two Drabants, who took the King under the arms and placed him on horſeback, notwithſtanding the extreme pain of his wounds.

PONIATOWSKY, though he had no command in the army, became on this occaſion a General through neceſſity, and rallied five hundred horſe near the King's perſon; ſome of them Drabants, others Officers, and a few private troopers. This body being aſſembled, and animated by the misfortune of their Prince, made their way through more than ten Ruſſian regiments, and conducted Charles through the midſt of the enemy, for the ſpace of a league, to the baggage of the Swediſh army.

CHARLES, being purſued in his flight, had his horſe killed under him; Colonel Gieta, though wounded, and ſpent with loſs of blood, gave him his. Thus in the courſe of the flight they twice put this conqueror on horſeback, who had not been able to mount a horſe during the engagement.

THIS ſurpriſing retreat was of great conſequence in ſuch diſtreſsful circumſtances; but he was obliged to fly ſtill further. They found Count Piper's coach among the baggage; for the King had never uſed one

ſince

ſince he left Stockholm: they put him into this vehicle, and took their route towards the Boriſthenes with great precipitation. The King, who, from the time they put him on horſeback till his arrival at the baggage, had not ſpoke a ſingle word, at length enquired what was become of Count Piper. They told him he was taken priſoner, with all the Officers of the Chancery. "And General Renſchild, and the "Duke of Wirtemberg?" added the King. "They are "alſo priſoners," ſaid Poniatowſky. "Priſoners to the "Ruſſians!" returned Charles, ſhrugging up his ſhoulders: "Come then, let us rather go to the Turks." They could not perceive, however, the leaſt mark of dejection in his countenance; and whoever had ſeen him at that time, without knowing his ſituation, would never have ſuſpected that he was conquered and wounded.

WHILE he was getting off, the Ruſſians ſeized his artillery in the camp before Pultowa, his baggage, and his military cheſts, in which they found ſix millions in ſpecie, the ſpoils of the Poles and Saxons. About nine thouſand men, Swedes and Coſſacks, were killed in the battle, and about ſix thouſand taken priſoners. There ſtill remained about ſixteen thouſand men, including the Swedes, Poles, and Coſſacks, who fled towards the Boriſthenes under the conduct of General Lewenhaupt. He marched one way with theſe fugitive troops, and the King took another road with ſome of his horſe. The coach in which he rode broke down

down in their march, and they again ſet him on horſe-back. To complete his misfortune, he wandered all night in a wood; where, his courage being no longer able to ſupport his exhauſted ſpirits, the pain of his wound becoming more intolerable through fatigue, and his horſe falling under him through wearineſs, he lay ſeveral hours at the foot of a tree, in danger of being ſurpriſed every moment by the conquerors, who were ſearching for him on all ſides.

At laſt, in the night of the ninth or tenth of July, he found himſelf oppoſite to the Boriſthenes. Lewenhaupt had juſt arrived with the remains of his army. The Swedes beheld with a mixture of joy and grief their King, whom they had believed dead. The enemy was approaching, and the Swedes had neither a bridge to paſs the river, time to make one, powder to defend themſelves, nor proviſions to ſupport an army, which had eaten nothing for two days. At the ſame time the remains of this army were Swedes, and the conquered King was Charles XII. Almoſt all the Officers imagined that they were to wait there with firmneſs for the Ruſſians, and that they ſhould either conquer or die on the banks of the Boriſthenes. There was no doubt but Charles would have taken this reſolution, had he not been exhauſted with weakneſs. His wound was now come to a ſuppuration, attended with a fever; and it hath been remarked, that men of the greateſt intrepidity, when ſeized with a fever, which is common in ſuppuration, loſe that inſtinct of valour, which,

which, like other virtues, requires the direction of a clear head. Charles was now no longer himſelf. It is what I have been aſſured of, and what is moſt probably the truth. They carried him along like a ſick perſon in a ſtate of inſenſibility. There was yet, by good luck, a ſorry calaſh, which they accidentally had brought thither with them. This they put on board a little boat; and the King and General Mazeppa embarked in another. The latter had ſaved ſeveral coffers full of money; but the current being too rapid, and a violent wind beginning to riſe, the Coſſack threw more than three-fourths of his treaſures into the river, to lighten the boat. Mullern, the King's Chancellor, and Count Poniatowſky, a man more neceſſary to the King than ever, by the reſources, which his ingenuity furniſhed in every difficulty, croſſed over in other barks, with ſome Officers. Three hundred of the Swediſh cavalry, and a great number of Poles and Coſſacks, truſting to the goodneſs of their horſes, ventured to paſs the river by ſwimming. Their troop, keeping cloſe together, reſiſted the current and broke the waves; but all thoſe who attempted to paſs a little below, were carried down by the ſtream, and periſhed in the river. Of the infantry, who riſked the paſſage, not one arrived on the oppoſite ſhore.

While the ſhattered remains of the army were in this extremity, Prince Menzikoff approached with ten thouſand horſemen, having each a foot-ſoldier behind him. The carcaſes of the Swedes, who had died by the way of their wounds, fatigue, and hunger, ſufficiently apprized

apprized him of the road, which the fugitive army had taken. The Prince ſent a trumpet to the Swediſh General, to offer him a capitulation. Four General Officers were immediately diſpatched by Lewenhaupt to receive the commands of the conqueror. Before that day, ſixteen thouſand ſoldiers of King Charles would have attacked the whole forces of the Ruſſian Empire, and would have periſhed to a man rather than ſurrender. But after the loſs of a battle, and flight of two days, deprived of the preſence of their Prince, who was himſelf conſtrained to fly, the ſtrength of every ſoldier being exhauſted, and their courage no longer ſupported by hope, the love of life overcame their natural intrepidity. Colonel Troutefette alone, ſince Governor of Stralſund, obſerving the Muſcovites approach, advanced with one Swediſh battalion to attack them, hoping by this means to induce the reſt of the troops to follow his example. But Lewenhaupt was obliged to oppoſe this unvailing ardour. The capitulation was ſettled, and the whole army were made priſoners of war. Some ſoldiers, in deſpair at the thoughts of falling into the hands of the Muſcovites, precipitated themſelves into the Boriſthenes. Two Officers of the regiment of the brave Troutefette killed each other, and the reſt were made ſlaves. They all filed off in the preſence of Prince Menzikoff, laying their arms at his feet, as thirty thouſand Muſcovites had done nine years before at thoſe of the King of Sweden, at Narva; with this difference, that the King diſmiſſed all theſe Muſcovite priſoners,

priſoners, whom he did not fear, and the Czar retained the Swedes, who were taken at Pultowa.

THESE unhappy creatures were afterwards diſperſed through the Czar's dominions, particularly in Siberia, a vaſt province of Great Tartary, which extends eaſtward, to the frontiers of the Chineſe empire. In this barbarous country, where even the uſe of bread was unknown, the Swedes, become ingenious through neceſſity, exerciſed the trades and employments, of which they had the leaſt notion. All the diſtinctions, which fortune makes among men, were there baniſhed. The Officer, who could not follow any trade, was obliged to cleave and carry wood for the ſoldier, now turned taylor, clothier, joiner, maſon, or goldſmith, and who earned his ſubſiſtence. Some of the Officers became painters, and others architects; ſome of them taught the languages and mathematics. They even eſtabliſhed ſome public ſchools, which in time became ſo uſeful and famous, that children were ſent thither from Muſcow.

COUNT PIPER, the King of Sweden's firſt Miniſter, was for a long time confined in priſon at Peterſburgh. The Czar was perſuaded, as well as the reſt of Europe, that this Miniſter had ſold his maſter to the Duke of Marlborough, and drawn on Muſcovy the arms of Sweden, which might have given peace to Europe. He, therefore, rendered his confinement the more ſevere. This Miniſter died a few years after in Muſcovy, little

little aſſiſted by his own family, who lived in opulence at Stockholm, and vainly lamented by his King, who would never condeſcend to offer a ranſom for his Miniſter, which he feared the Czar would not accept of, as no cartel of exchange had ever been ſettled between Charles and the Czar.

THE Emperor of Muſcovy, elated with a joy, which he took no pains to conceal, received upon the field of battle the priſoners, whom they brought to him in crouds; and aſked every moment, "Where then is "my brother Charles?"

HE did the Swediſh Generals the honour of inviting them to his table. Among other queſtions, which he put to them, he aſked General Renſchild, "what "might be the number of his maſter's troops before "the battle?" Renſchild anſwered, "that the King "alone had the muſter-roll, and would never commu-"nicate it to any one; but that for his own part, he "imagined the whole might be about thirty thouſand, "of which eighteen thouſand were Swedes, and the "reſt Coſſacks." The Czar ſeemed to be ſurprized, and aſked "how they durſt venture to penetrate "into ſo diſtant a country, and lay ſiege to Pultowa, "with ſuch a handful of men?" "We were not al-"ways conſulted," replied the Swediſh General, "but, "like faithful ſervants, we obeyed our maſter's orders "without ever preſuming to contradict them." The Czar, at this anſwer, turned about to ſome of his cour-

tiers, who were formerly ſuſpected of having engaged in a conſpiracy againſt him: "Ah! (ſays he) "ſee "how a King ought to be ſerved;" and then taking a glaſs of wine, "To the health," ſays he, "of my "maſters in the art of war." Renſchild aſked him, who were the perſons whom he honoured with ſo high a title. "You, gentlemen, the Swediſh Generals," replied the Czar. "Your Majeſty is very ungrateful, "then," replied the Count, "to treat your maſters "with ſo much ſeverity." After dinner the Czar cauſed their ſwords to be reſtored to all the General Officers, and behaved to them like a Prince, who wiſhed to give his ſubjects a leſſon of generoſity and politeneſs, with which he was well acquainted. But this very Prince, who treated the Swediſh Generals with ſo much humanity, cauſed all the Coſſacks, that fell into his hands, to be broken upon the wheel.

THUS the Swediſh army, which left Saxony ſo triumphantly, was no more. One half of them had periſhed with hunger, and the other half were either maſſacred or made ſlaves. Charles XII. had loſt in one day the fruit of nine years labour, and of almoſt an hundred battles. He was flying in a wretched caliſh, having by his ſide Major-General Hord, who was dangerouſly wounded. The reſt of his party followed, ſome on foot, ſome on horſeback, and others in waggons, through a deſert, where they neither ſaw huts, tents, men, beaſts, nor roads; every thing was wanting, even water itſelf. It was now the beginning

ning of July; the country lay in the forty-ſeventh degree of latitude; the dry ſand of the deſert rendered the heat of the ſun more inſupportable; the horſes dropt down by the way; and the men were ready to die with thirſt. A brook of muddy water, which they found towards evening, was their only reſource; they filled ſome bladders with this water, which ſaved the lives of the King's little troop. After a march of five days, he at laſt found himſelf on the banks of the river Hypanis, now called Bogh by the barbarians, who have diſfigured the very names of thoſe countries, which once flouriſhed ſo nobly in the poſſeſſion of the Greek colonies. This river joins the Boriſthenes ſome miles lower, and falls along with it into the Black Sea.

On the other ſide of the Bogh, towards the ſouth, ſtands the little town of Oczakou, a frontier of the Turkiſh Empire. The inhabitants ſeeing a troop of ſoldiers approach, to whoſe dreſs and language they were ſtrangers, refuſed to carry them over the river without an order from Mehemet Pacha, Governor of Oczakou. The King ſent an expreſs to the Governor, to demand a paſſage. This Turk, not knowing what to do, in a country where one falſe ſtep frequently coſts a man his life, did not dare to take any thing upon himſelf, without having firſt obtained the permiſſion of the Seraſkier of the province, who reſides at Bender in Beſſarabia. While they were waiting for this permiſſion, the Ruſſians, who had made the King's

King's army priſoner, had croſſed the Boriſthenes, and were approaching to take him alſo. At laſt the Pacha of Oczakou ſent word to the King, that he would furniſh him with one ſmall boat, to tranſport himſelf and two or three of his attendants. In this extremity the Swedes took by force what they could not obtain by gentle means: ſome of them went over to the further ſide in a ſmall ſkiff, ſeized on ſome boats, and brought them to the hither bank of the river. This proved their ſafe-guard; for the maſters of the Turkiſh barks, fearing they ſhould loſe ſuch a favourable opportunity of getting a good freight, came in crowds to offer their ſervice. At the ſame time preciſely arrived a favourable anſwer from the Seraſkier of Bender; but the Muſcovites appeared, and the King had the mortification to ſee five hundred of his men ſeized by the enemy, whoſe inſulting bravadoes he even heard. The Pacha of Oczakou, by means of an interpreter, aſked his pardon for the delays, which had occaſioned the loſs of theſe five hundred men, and humbly entreated him not to complain of it to the Grand Seignior. Charles promiſed, though not without giving him as ſevere a reprimand as if he had been ſpeaking to one of his own ſubjects.

The Commander of Bender, who was likewiſe Seraſkier, a title which anſwers to that of General and Pacha of the Province, which ſignifies Governor and Intendant, immediately ſent an Aga to compliment the King, and to offer him a magnificent tent, with

with proviſions, baggage waggons, and all the conveniences, officers, and attendants neceſſary to conduct him to Bender in a ſplendid manner; for it is the cuſtom of the Turks, not only to defray the charges of Ambaſſadors to the place of their reſidence, but likewiſe to ſupply, with great liberality, the neceſſities of thoſe Princes, who take refuge among them, during the time of their ſtay.

BOOK.

BOOK V.

ARGUMENT.

State of the Ottoman Porte.—Charles takes up his Abode near Bender.—His Employments.—His Intrigues at the Porte.—His Deſigns.—Auguſtus regains his Throne.—The King of Denmark makes a Deſcent upon Sweden.—All the other Dominions of Charles are attacked.—The Czar enters Moſcow in Triumph.—The Affair of Pruth.—Hiſtory of the Czarina, who from a Peaſant became an Empreſs.

ACHMET III. at that time governed the Turkiſh Empire. He had been placed upon the throne in 1703, in the room of his brother Muſtapha, by a revolution, like that which transferred the crown of England from James II. to his ſon-in-law William. Muſtapha, by ſubmitting in every thing to his Mufti, whom the Turks abhorred, provoked the whole Empire to riſe againſt him. His army, by the aſſiſtance of which he hoped to puniſh the maleconten ts, joined his enemies. He was ſeized and depoſed in form, and his brother taken from the Seraglio, in order to be created Sultan, almoſt without ſpilling a ſingle drop of blood. Achmet ſhut up the depoſed Sultan in the Seraglio at Conſtantinople, where he lived for ſeveral years, to the great aſtoniſhment of Turkey, which had been

been accuſtomed to ſee the death of her Princes immediately follow their dethronement.

THE new Sultan, as the only recompence for a crown, which he owed to the Miniſters, to the Generals, to the Officers of the Janiſſaries, and, in a word, to thoſe, who had had any hand in the revolution, put them all to death, one after another, for fear they ſhould one day attempt a ſecond revolution. By the ſacrifice of ſo many brave men, he weakened the ſtrength of the nation, but at the ſame time eſtabliſhed his throne, at leaſt for ſome years. He next applied himſelf to amaſs riches, and was the firſt of the Ottoman race, who ventured to make a ſmall alteration in the current coin, and to impoſe new taxes; but he has been obliged to ſtop ſhort in both theſe enterprizes for fear of an inſurrection. The rapacity and tyranny of the Grand Seignior are ſeldom extended farther than the Officers of the Empire, who, whatever they may be in other reſpects, are domeſtic ſlaves to the Sultan; while the reſt of the Muſſulmen live in profound tranquillity, without fearing for their lives, their fortune, or their liberty.

SUCH was the Turkiſh Emperor in whoſe territories the King of Sweden ſought an aſylum. As ſoon as he ſet foot in the Sultan's dominions, he wrote him a letter, which bears date the 13th of July 1709. Several copies of this letter were ſpread abroad, all of which are now held ſpurious; but of all thoſe I have

have ſeen, there is not one which does not mark the haughtineſs of the author, and is not more conformable to his courage than his ſituation. The Sultan did not return him an anſwer till towards the end of September. The pride of the Ottoman Porte made Charles ſenſible of the diſtinction it placed between a Turkiſh Emperor, and a King of part of Scandinavia, a conquered and fugitive Chriſtian. For the reſt, all theſe letters, which are ſeldom written by Sovereigns themſelves, are but vain formalities, which neither diſcover the character of the Princes, nor the ſtate of their affairs.

CHARLES XII. was, in effect, in no other ſituation in Turkey than that of a captive honourably treated, yet he conceived the deſign of arming the Ottoman Empire againſt his enemies, and flattered himſelf that he ſhould reduce Poland under the yoke, and ſubdue Ruſſia. He had an Envoy at Conſtantinople; but the perſon that ſerved him moſt effectually in his vaſt projects was the Count de Poniatowſky, who went to Conſtantinople without any commiſſion, and ſoon rendered himſelf neceſſary to the King, agreeable to the Porte, and at laſt dangerous to the Grand Viziers themſelves.*

* *It was from this nobleman I received not only the remarks, which have been publiſhed, and of which the Chaplain Norberg hath made uſe, but likewiſe ſeveral other manuſcripts relating to this Hiſtory.*

ONE of thoſe, who ſeconded his deſigns with the greateſt addreſs, was the phyſician Fonſeca, a Portugueſe Jew, ſettled at Conſtantinople, a man of knowledge and of the World, well qualified for the management of buſineſs, and perhaps the only philoſopher of his nation; his profeſſion procured him a free acceſs to the Ottoman Porte, and frequently gained him the confidence of the Viziers. With this Gentleman I was very well acquainted at Paris, who confirmed to me all the particulars I am going to relate. Count Poniatowſky has informed me, both by letters and in converſation, that he had had the addreſs to convey ſome letters to the Sultana Validé, the mother of the reigning Emperor, who had formerly been ill-uſed by her ſon, but now began to acquire credit in the Seraglio. A Jeweſs, who was often admitted to this Princeſs, never ceaſed to recount to her the exploits of the King of Sweden, and charmed her ear by theſe relations. The Sultaneſs, moved by that ſecret inclination, with which moſt women feel themſelves inſpired in favour of extraordinary men, even without having ſeen them, openly eſpouſed this Prince's cauſe in the Seraglio, whom ſhe called by no other name than that of her Lion. "When will you," would ſhe ſometimes ſay to the Sultan her ſon, "aſſiſt "my Lion to devour this Czar?" She even ſo far diſpenſed with the auſtere rules of the Seraglio, as to write ſeveral letters with her own hand to Count Poniatowſky, in whoſe cuſtody they ſtill are, at the time of my writing this Hiſtory.

MEANWHILE they conducted the King with all honour to Bender, through the deſerts, that was formerly called the wilderneſs of the Getæ. The Turks took care that nothing ſhould be wanting on the way to render his journey agreeable. A great many Poles, Swedes, and Coſſacks, who had eſcaped from the Muſcovites, came by different roads to increaſe his train on their march. By the time he reached Bender, he had eighteen hundred men, who were all maintained and lodged, they and their horſes, at the expence of the Grand Seignior.

THE King choſe to encamp near Bender, rather than lodge in the town. The Seraſkier Juſſuf Pacha cauſed a magnificent tent to be erected for him; and tents were likewiſe provided for all the lords of his retinue. Some time after, Charles built a houſe in this place; the officers followed his example, and the ſoldiers raiſed barracks; ſo that this camp inſenſibly became a little town. The King, not being yet cured of his wound, was obliged to have a carious bone extracted from his foot; but as ſoon as he could mount a horſe, he reſumed his uſual labours, always riſing before the ſun, tiring three horſes a-day, and exerciſing his ſoldiers. His ſole amuſement was ſometimes playing at cheſs; and as the characters of men are often diſcovered by the moſt trifling incidents, it may not be improper to obſerve, that he always moved the King in his game, and even made

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more uſe of him than of the other pieces; by which he loſt every party.

At Bender, Charles found himſelf amidſt an abundance of every thing, very uncommon to a conquered and fugitive Prince; for beſides the more than ſufficient quantity of proviſions, and the five hundred crowns a day, which he received from the Ottoman munificence, he ſtill drew money from France, and borrowed of the merchants at Conſtantinople. A part of this money ſerved to forward his intrigues in the Seraglio, in buying the favours of the Viziers, or procuring their ruin. The reſt he diſtributed with great profuſion among his Officers, and the Janiſſaries, who compoſed his guards at Bender. Grothuſen, his favourite and Treaſurer, was the diſpenſer of his liberality; a man, who, contrary to the cuſtom of perſons in that ſtation, was as fond of giving as his maſter. He carried him one day an account of ſixty thouſand crowns in two lines; ten thouſand crowns given to the Swedes and Janiſſaries, by the generous orders of his Majeſty, and the reſt ſpent by myſelf: "It is thus I would have my friends give in their accounts," ſaid the King: "Mullern makes me "read whole pages for the ſum of ten thouſand "livres. I like the laconic ſtile of Grothuſen much "better." One of his old Officers, who was ſuſpected of being ſomewhat covetous, complained to him, that his Majeſty gave all to Grothuſen: "I "give money," replies the King, "to none but "thoſe

"thoſe who know how to uſe it." This generoſity frequently reduced him ſo low, that he had not wherewith to give. More œconomy in his liberality would have been as honourable, and more for his intereſt; but it was the failing of this Prince to carry every virtue to exceſs.

GREAT numbers of ſtrangers went from Conſtantinople to ſee him. The Turks and the neighbouring Tartars came thither in crowds; all reſpected and admired him. His inflexible reſolution to abſtain from wine, and his regularity in aſſiſting twice a-day at public prayers, made them ſay, "This is a true "Muſſulman:" and they burned with impatience to march along with him to the conqueſt of Muſcovy.

DURING his ſtay at Bender, which was much longer than he expected, he inſenſibly acquired a taſte for reading. Baron Fabricius, a gentleman in the ſervice of the Duke of Holſtein, a young man of an amiable character, who poſſeſſed that gaiety of temper and eaſy turn of wit, which are ſo agreeable to Princes, was the perſon who engaged him in theſe literary amuſements. He had been ſent to reſide with him at Bender, to take care of the intereſts of the young Duke of Holſtein; and he ſucceeded therein by rendering himſelf agreeable. He had read all the beſt French authors. He perſuaded the King to read the Tragedies of Peter Corneille, thoſe of Racine, and the works of Deſpreaux. The King had no reliſh for the Satires of the

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laſt author, which indeed are far from being his beſt pieces, but he was very fond of his other writings. When he read that paſſage of the Eight Satire, where the author treats Alexander as a fool and a madman, he tore the leaf.

Of all the French tragedies, Mithridates was the one, which pleaſed him moſt, becauſe the ſituation of that monarch, vanquiſhed and ſtill breathing revenge, was conformable to his own. He ſhewed M. Fabricius the paſſages that ſtruck him, pointing them out with his finger; but would never read any of them aloud, nor ever hazard a ſingle word in French. Nay, when he afterwards ſaw M. des Alleurs, the French Ambaſſador at the Porte, a man of diſtinguiſhed merit, but acquainted only with his mother-tongue, he anſwered him in Latin; of which, when M. des Alleurs proteſted he did not underſtand four words, the King, rather than talk French, ſent for an interpreter.

This was the employment of Charles XII. at Bender, where he waited till a Turkiſh army ſhould come to his aſſiſtance. His envoy preſented memorials in his name to the Grand Vizier, and Poniatowſky ſupported them with all his intereſt. The talent of inſinuation never fails of ſucceſs. He was always dreſſed in the Turkiſh faſhion, and had free acceſs to every place. The Grand Seignior preſented him with a purſe of a thouſand ducats, and the Grand Vizier

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ſaid to him, "I will take your King in one hand, "and a ſword in the other, and will lead him to "Moſcow, at the head of two hundred thouſand "men." This Grand Vizier was called Chourlouli-Ali Pacha; he was the ſon of a peaſant of the village of Chourlou. Such an extraction is not held as a reproach among the Turks, who have no ranks of nobility, neither that which is annexed to certain employments, nor that which conſiſts in titles. With them, the dignity and importance of a man's character depend entirely upon his perſonal ſervices; a cuſtom which prevails in moſt of the Eaſtern countries, and indeed a cuſtom the moſt natural, and which might be productive of the moſt beneficial effects, if poſts of honour were conferred on none but men of merit; but the Viziers, for the moſt part are no better than the creatures of a Black Eunuch, or a favourite female ſlave.

THE firſt Miniſter ſoon changed his mind. The King could do nothing but negociate; but the Czar could give money, which he did; and even made the money of Charles ſerve him on this occaſion. The military cheſt, which he took at Pultowa, furniſhed him with new arms againſt the vanquiſhed King; and it was no longer the queſtion at Court, whether war ſhould be made upon the Ruſſians. The intereſt of the Czar was all powerful at the Porte, which granted ſuch honours to his Envoy as the Muſcovite Miniſters had never before enjoyed at Conſtantinople. He was allowed to have a Seraglio, that is to ſay, a palace in the quarter of the Franks, and the liberty of conver-

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ſing with other foreign Miniſters. The Czar even thought he might demand that General Mazeppa ſhould be put into his hands, as Charles had cauſed the unhappy Patkul to be delivered up to him. Chourlouli-Ali Pacha knew not how to refuſe any thing to a Prince, who made his demands with millions in his hand. Thus the very ſame Grand Vizier, who had before promiſed, in the moſt ſolemn manner, to lead the King of Sweden into Muſcovy with two hundred thouſand men, dared to propoſe to him to conſent to the ſacrifice of General Mazeppa. Charles was enraged at this demand. It is hard to ſay how far the Vizier might have puſhed the affair, had not Mazeppa, who was now ſeventy years of age, died exactly at this juncture. The grief and indignation of the King were greatly augmented, when he learned that Tolſtoy, now become the Czar's Ambaſſador at the Porte, was publicly attended by the Swedes, that had been made ſlaves at Pultowa, and that thoſe brave ſoldiers were every day expoſed to ſale in the market at Conſtantinople. Nay, the Ruſſian Ambaſſador ſaid aloud, that the Muſſulman troops at Bender were placed there, more with a view to ſecure the King's perſon, than to do him any honour.

CHARLES, abandoned by the Grand Vizier, and vanquiſhed by the Czar's money in Turkey, as he had before been by his arms in the Ukraine, ſaw himſelf deceived and deſpiſed by the Porte, and almoſt a priſoner among the Tartars. His attendants began to deſpair.

deſpair. He himſelf alone remained firm, and never appeared dejected even for a moment. The Sultan he believed to be ignorant of the intrigues of Chourlouli-Ali, his Grand Vizier; he reſolved, therefore, to acquaint him with them, and Poniatowſky took the charge of this hazardous enterprize. The Grand Seignior goes every Friday to the Moſque, ſurrounded by his Solaks, a kind of guards, whoſe turbans are ornamented with ſuch high feathers that they conceal the Sultan from the ſight of the people. When any one has a petition to preſent to the Grand Seignior, he endeavours to mingle with the guards, and holds the petition aloft. Sometimes the Sultan deigns to receive it himſelf; but he oftener orders an Aga to take charge of it, and has the petitions brought to him on his return from the Moſque. There is no fear of any one daring to importune him with uſeleſs memorials, and trifling petitions, as leſs is written at Conſtantinople in a whole year than they do at Paris in one day. There is ſtill leſs danger of any memorials being preſented againſt the Miniſters, to whom the Sultan often ſends them without reading. Poniatowſky had only this method to convey the King of Sweden's complaints to the Grand Seignior. He drew up a heavy charge againſt the Grand Vizier. M. de Feriol, then the French Ambaſſador, and who gave me an account of the whole affair, had the memorial tranſlated into the Turkiſh tongue. A Greek was hired to preſent it. This Greek, having mingled with the guards of the Grand Seignior, held the paper

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ſo high for a long time, and made ſuch a noiſe, that the Sultan obſerved him, and took the memorial himſelf.

This method of preſenting memorials to the Sultan againſt his Viziers was frequently employed. A Swede, called Leloing, gave in another petition a few days after. Thus in the Turkiſh Empire was Charles XII. reduced to the neceſſity of employing the ſame expedients with an oppreſſed ſubject.

Some days after this, the Sultan ſent the King of Sweden, as the only anſwer to his complaints, five-and-twenty Arabian horſes, one of which, that had carried his Highneſs, was covered with a ſaddle and houſing enriched with precious ſtones, with ſtirrups of maſſy gold. This preſent was accompanied with an obliging letter, but conceived in general terms, and ſuch as gave reaſon to ſuſpect that the Miniſter had done nothing without the Sultan's conſent. Chourlouli-Ali too, who knew the art of diſſembling, ſent the King five very curious horſes. But Charles, with a lofty air, ſaid to the perſon who brought them, "Return to your maſter, and tell him, I never receive "a preſent from an enemy."

Poniatowsky having already dared to preſent a memorial againſt the Grand Vizier, next formed the bold deſign of depoſing him. He knew that this Vizier was diſagreeable to the Sultana-Mother, that

Kiſlar-Aga. the chief of the Black Eunuchs, and the Aga of the Janiſſaries, alſo hated him; he therefore prompted them all three to ſpeak againſt him. It was ſomething very ſurpriſing to ſee a Chriſtian, a Pole, an uncommiſſioned Agent of the King of Sweden, who had taken refuge among the Turks, caballing almoſt openly at the Porte againſt a Viceroy of the Ottoman Empire, who, at the ſame time, was both an able Miniſter and a favourite of his maſter. Poniatowſky could never have ſucceeded, and the idea of ſuch a project alone would have coſt him his life, if a power ſuperior to all thoſe, that operated in his favour had not given a finiſhing ſtroke to the fortune of the Grand Vizier Chourlouli.

THE Sultan had a young favourite, who afterwards governed the Ottoman Empire, and was killed in Hungary in 1716, at the battle of Peterwaradin, gained over the Turks by Prince Eugene of Savoy. His name was Coumourgi Ali Pacha. His birth was very little different from that of Chourlouli, being the ſon of a coal-heaver, as Coumourgi ſignifies, *coumour* in the Turkiſh language ſignifying coal. The Emperor Achmet III. uncle of Achmet II. having met Coumourgi, while yet an infant, in a little wood near Adrianople, was ſtruck with his extreme beauty, and cauſed him to be conducted to the Seraglio. He was beloved by Muſtapha, the eldeſt ſon and ſucceſſor of Mahomet; and Achmet III. made him his favourite. He had then no other place but that of Selictar

Selictar-Aga, Sword-bearer of the Crown. His extreme youth did not allow him to pretend to the poſt of Grand Vizier, but yet he had the ambition to aſpire to it. The Swediſh faction could never win the affections of this favourite. He was never the friend of Charles, nor of any other Chriſtian Prince, nor of any of their Miniſters, but on this occaſion he ſerved the King without intending it; he united himſelf with the Sultaneſs Validé, and the great Officers of the Porte, to depoſe Chourlouli, whom they all hated. This old Miniſter, who had long and faithfully ſerved his maſter, fell a victim to the caprice of a boy and the intrigues of a foreigner. He was ſtripped of his dignity and riches; his wife, the daughter of the late Sultan Muſtapha, was alſo taken from him; and himſelf was baniſhed to Caffa, formerly called Theodoſia, in Crim Tartary. The Bull, that is to ſay, the Seal of the Empire, was given to Numa Couprougli, grandſon of the great Couprougli, who took Candia. This new Vizier was, what ill-informed Chriſtians can hardly believe it poſſible for a Turk to be, a man of inflexible virtue, a ſcrupulous obſerver of the law, and one who frequently oppoſed juſtice to the will of the Sultan. He could not endure to hear of a war againſt Muſcovy, which he treated as unjuſt and unneceſſary; but the ſame attachment to his law, that prevented his making war upon the Czar contrary to the faith of treaties, made him reſpect the duties of hoſpitality towards the King of Sweden. He would ſay to his maſter. "The law forbids you to attack the

"Czar,

"Czar, who has not offended you; but it commands "you to ſuccour the King of Sweden, who is an un- "fortunate Prince in your dominions." To this Prince he ſent eight hundred purſes (every purſe containing five hundred crowns,) and adviſed him to return peaceably to his own dominions, either through the territories of the Emperor of Germany, or in ſome of the French veſſels, which were then in the port of Conſtantinople, and which M. de Feriol, the French Ambaſſador at the Porte, offered to Charles to conduct him to Marſeilles. Count Poniatowſky negociated more than ever with this Miniſter, and acquired ſuch a ſuperiority in theſe negociations with an incorruptible Vizier, as the gold of the Muſcovites was unable to diſpute. The Ruſſian faction thought their beſt reſource was to poiſon ſuch a dangerous negociator. They accordingly won over one of his domeſtics, who was to give him the poiſon in a diſh of Coffee; but the crime was diſcovered before it was carried into execution; the poiſon was found in the hands of the domeſtic, contained in a ſmall vial, which was carried to the Grand Seignior. The poiſoner was tried in a full Divan, and condemned to the gallies; for the juſtice of the Turks never puniſhes with death thoſe crimes, which have not been executed.

CHARLES XII. who could never be perſuaded but that, ſooner or later, he ſhould be able to engage the Turkiſh Empire in a war againſt Muſcovy, rejected every

every propoſal, which was held out for his peaceable return home; and never ceaſed to repreſent to the Turks the formidable power of that very Czar, whom he had ſo long deſpiſed: his emiſſaries were perpetually inſinuating, that Peter Alexiowitz wanted to make himſelf maſter of the navigation of the Black Sea; and that, after having ſubdued the Coſſacks, he would carry his arms into Crim Tartary. Sometimes theſe repreſentations animated the Porte; at others the Ruſſian Miniſters rendered them of no avail.

WHILE Charles XII. ſuffered his fate to depend upon the caprice of Viziers, and while he was alternately receiving favours and affronts from a foreign Power, preſenting petitions to the Sultan, and ſubſiſting upon his bounty in a deſert, all his enemies, awakened from their former lethargy, invaded his dominions.

THE battle of Pultowa was the firſt ſignal to a revolution in Poland. King Auguſtus returned to that country, proteſting againſt his abdication, and the peace of Altranſtad, and publicly accuſing Charles, whom he no longer feared, of robbery, and cruelty. He immediately impriſoned Fingſtein and Imhoff, his Plenipotentiaries, who had ſigned his abdication, as if in ſo doing they had exceeded their orders, and betrayed their maſter. His Saxon troops, which had been the pretext of his dethronement, conducted him back to Warſaw, accompanied by moſt of the Poliſh Palatines,

palatines, who had formerly ſworn fidelity to him, and had afterwards taken the ſame oath to Staniſlaus, and were now come to do it again to Auguſtus. Siniawſki himſelf rejoined his party, and, having loſt the idea of becoming King, was content to remain Grand-General of the Crown. Fleming, his firſt Miniſter, who had been obliged to quit Saxony for a time, for fear of being delivered up with Patkul, now contributed by his addreſs to bring back to his maſter's intereſt a great part of the Poliſh nobility.

THE Pope abſolved the people from the oath of allegiance, which they had taken to Staniſlaus. This ſtep of the Holy Father was exceedingly apropos, and, ſupported by the forces of Auguſtus, was of conſiderable weight; it ſtrengthened the credit of the Court of Rome in Poland, who had no inclination at that time to conteſt with the Sovereign Pontiffs their chimerical right of interfering in the temporal concerns of Princes. Every one voluntarily returned to the government of Auguſtus, and received without repugnance a uſeleſs abſolution, which the Nuncio did not fail to repreſent as abſolutely neceſſary.

THE power of Charles and the grandeur of Sweden were now drawing towards their laſt period. More than ten crowned heads had long beheld with fear and envy the Swediſh power, extending itſelf far beyond its natural bounds, on the other ſide of the Baltic ſea, from the Duna to the Elbe. The fall of Charles,

harles, and his abſence, revived the intereſted views nd jealouſies of all theſe Princes, which had for a ng time been laid aſleep by treaties, and by their ability to break them.

THE Czar, more powerful than all of them put ogether, profited by his late victory; he took Wiourg and all Carelia, overran Finland with troops, aid ſiege to Riga, and ſent a body of forces into Poland, to aid Auguſtus in recovering his throne. This Emperor was, at that time, what Charles had been formerly, the arbiter of Poland and the North; but he conſulted only his intereſt, while, on the other hand, Charles had never hearkened to any thing but his ideas of revenge and glory. The Swediſh monarch had ſuccoured his allies and deſtroyed his enemies, without reaping the leaſt fruit from his victories; he Czar, conducting himſelf more like a Prince, and eſs like a Hero, would not aſſiſt the King of Poland, but on condition, that Livonia ſhould be ceded to him; and that that province, for which Auguſtus had kindled the war, ſhould remain for ever in the poſſeſſion off the Muſcovites.

THE King of Denmark, forgetting the treaty of Travendal, as Auguſtus had that of Altranſtad, began from that time to think of making himſelf maſter of the Duchies of Holſtein and Bremen, to which he renewed his pretenſions. The King of Pruſſia had ancient claims upon Swediſh Pomerania, which he now

now reſolved to revive. The Duke of Mecklenburgh ſaw with envy that the Swedes were ſtill in poſſeſſion of Wiſmar, the fineſt town in the Duchy: that Prince was to marry a niece of the Ruſſian Emperor; and the Czar wanted only a pretext for eſtabliſhing himſelf in Germany, after the example of the Swedes. George, Elector of Hanover, ſought to enrich himſelf, on his ſide, with the ſpoils of Charles. The Biſhop of Munſter too would have been willing enough to avail himſelf of ſome of his claims, had he been able to ſupport them.

TWELVE or thirteen thouſand Swedes defended Pomerania, and the other countries, which Charles poſſeſſed in Germany; it was there that the war was moſt likely to begin. This ſtorm alarmed the Emperor and his Allies. It is the law of the Empire, that whoever invades one of its provinces ſhall be reputed an enemy to the whole Germanic body.

BUT there was ſtill a greater embarraſſment; all theſe Princes, except the Czar, were then united againſt Louis XIV. whoſe power, for a long time, had been as formidable to the Empire as that of Charles.

GERMANY, at the beginning of this century, had found itſelf hard preſſed, from ſouth to north, between the armies of France and Sweden. The French had paſſed the Danube, and the Swedes the Oder, and had

had their forces, victorious as they then were, been joined together, the Empire had been undone. But the ſame fatality that ruined Sweden, had likewiſe humbled France: Sweden, however, had ſtill reſources left; and Louis carried on the war with vigour, though without ſucceſs. Had Pomerania and the Duchy of Bremen become the theatre of war, it was to be feared that the Empire would ſuffer by it; and that, being weakened on that ſide, it would be leſs able to ſtand againſt Louis XIV. To prevent this danger, the Emperor, the Princes of the Empire, Anne Queen of England, and the States-General of the United Provinces, concluded, at the end of the year 1709, one of the moſt ſingular treaties that ever was ſigned.

It was ſtipulated by theſe Powers, that the war againſt the Swedes ſhould not be made in Pomerania, nor in any other of the German provinces, but that the enemies of Charles XII. ſhould be at liberty to attack him any-where elſe. The Czar and the King of Poland acceded to this treaty, in which they cauſed to be inſerted an article as extraordinary as the treaty itſelf; this was, that the twelve thouſand Swedes, who were in Pomerania, ſhould not be permitted to leave it to defend their other provinces.

To ſecure the execution of the treaty, they propoſed to raiſe an army to preſerve this imaginary neutrality. This army was to encamp on the banks of

the Oder. An unheard-of novelty, ſurely, to raiſe an army to prevent a war! Even the Princes, who were to pay the army, were moſt of them intereſted in beginning a war, which they thus pretended to prevent. The treaty alſo imported, that the army ſhould be compoſed of the troops of the Emperor, of the King of Pruſſia, of the Elector of Hanover, of the Landgrave of Heſſe, and of the Biſhop of Munſter.

THE iſſue of this project was ſuch as might naturally have been expected; it was not carried into execution. The Princes, who were to have furniſhed their contingents for completing the army, contributed nothing: there were not two regiments formed. Every body talked of a neutrality, but no body obſerved it; and all the princes of the North, who had any intereſt in quarrelling with the King of Sweden, were left at full liberty to diſpute with each other the ſpoils of that Prince.

AT this juncture, the Czar, after having quartered his troops in Lithuania, and having given orders for the ſiege of Riga, returned to Moſcow, to diſplay to his people a ſight as new as any thing he had hitherto done in the Kingdom: this was a triumph of nearly the ſame nature with that of the ancient Romans. He made his entry into Moſcow on the firſt of January, 1710, under ſeven triumphal arches, erected in the ſtreets, and adorned with every thing, which the climate

climate could furniſh, or which a flouriſhing commerce, rendered ſuch by his care, could produce. A regiment of guards began the proceſſion, followed by the pieces of artillery taken from the Swedes at Leſno and Pultowa, each being drawn by eight horſes, covered with ſcarlet houſings hanging down to the ground; then came the ſtandards, kettle-drums, and colours, won at thoſe two battles, carried by the very officers and ſoldiers who had taken them; and all theſe ſpoils were followed by the choiceſt troops of the Czar. After they had filed off, there appeared in a chariot, made on purpoſe *, the litter of Charles XII. found on the field of battle at Pultowa, all ſhattered with two cannon ſhot: behind this litter marched all the priſoners two and two: amongſt them appeared Count Piper, firſt Miniſter of Sweden, the celebrated Mareſchal Renſchild, the Count de Lewenhaupt, the Generals Slipenback, Stackelberg, and Hamilton, and all the officers, who were afterwards diſperſed through Great Ruſſia. Immediately after theſe appeared the Czar himſelf, mounted on the ſame horſe which he rode at the battle of Pultowa. A little after him came the Generals who had had a ſhare in the ſucceſs of the day. Then followed another regiment of

* *Mr. Norberg, Confeſſor of Charles XII. here corrects the author, and affirms that the litter was carried by the ſoldiers. For the truth of theſe eſſential circumſtances, we refer to thoſe who ſaw them.*

guards;

guards: and the waggons loaded with Swediſh ammunition cloſed the whole.

THIS pageantry was accompanied with the ringing of all the bells in Moſcow, with the ſound of drums, kettle-drums, trumpets; and an infinite number of muſical inſtruments were heard alternately with the ſalute of two hnndred pieces of cannon, and the acclamations of five hundred thouſand men, who, at every pauſe the Czar made in this triumphal entry, cried out, "Long live the Emperor our father."

THIS dazzling exhibition augmented the people's veneration for his perſon, and perhaps made him appear greater in their eyes than the real advantages they had derived from him. Meanwhile he continued the blockade of Riga. His Generals made themſelves maſter of the reſt of Livonia, and part of Finland. At the ſame time the King of Denmark came with his whole fleet to make a deſcent upon Sweden, where he landed ſeventeen thouſand men, whom he left under the command of the Count de Reventlau.

SWEDEN was at that time governed by a Regency compoſed of ſeveral Senators, whom the King appointed when he departed from Stockholm. The body of the Senate looking upon the government as their right, became jealous of the Regency. The State ſuffered by theſe diviſions: but when, after the battle of Pultowa, the firſt news they heard at Stockholm was,

that

that the King was at Bender, at the mercy of the Turks and Tartars, and that the Danes had diſembarked in Schonen, and had taken the town of Helſinburg, their jealouſies then vaniſhed, and they turned their whole attention to the preſervation of Sweden. Sweden was now drained, in a great meaſure, of regular troops; for, though Charles had always made his great expeditions at the head of ſmall armies, yet the innumerable battles he had fought in the ſpace of nine years, the neceſſity he was under of continually recruiting his forces, the maintaining his garriſons, and the ſtanding army he was conſtantly obliged to keep in Finland, Ingria, Livonia, Pomerania, Bremen, and Verden, had coſt Sweden, during the courſe of the war, above two hundred and fifty thouſand men; ſo that there did not remain eight thouſand of the ancient troops, which, with the new-raiſed militia, were the only reſources Sweden had.

The nation is naturally warlike; and every people inſenſibly adopt the diſpoſition of their King. They talked of nothing, from one end of the country to the other, but the prodigious atchievements of Charles and his Generals, and of the old regiments that fought under them at Narva, Duna, Cliſſau, Pultuſk, and Holloſin. The loweſt of the Swedes acquired from them a ſpirit of emulation and glory. Their affection for their King, their pity for his misfortunes, and their implacable hatred to the Danes, contributed to increaſe this ardour. In ſeveral other countries the peaſants

peaſants are ſlaves, or treated as ſuch; but here they compoſe a part of the State, are conſidered as citizens, and, of conſequence, are capable of more refined ſentiments; ſo that this new-raiſed militia became, in a ſhort time, the beſt troops of the North.

General Steinbock put himſelf, by order of the Regency, at the head of eight thouſand of the ancient troops, and about twelve thouſand of theſe new militia, to go in purſuit of the Danes, who ravaged all the country about Helſinburg, and had already laid contributions on ſome of the more inland provinces.

There was neither time nor opportunity to give cloathing to the new militia, ſo that moſt of theſe boors came in their coarſe linen frocks, having piſtols tied to their girdles with cords. Steinbock, at the head of this extraordinary army, overtook the Danes about three leagues from Helſinburg on the 10th of March, 1710. He wiſhed to have given his troops a few days reſt, to raiſe entrenchments, and to allow his new ſoldiers a ſufficient time to accuſtom themſelves to behold the enemy; but all the peaſants called out for battle the very day they arrived.

Several of the officers then preſent have ſince aſſured me, that they ſaw every ſoldier foaming with rage and choler, ſo great is the national hatred of the Swedes to the Danes. Steinbock profited by this ardour

ardour of their minds, which, in the day of battle, is of as much conſequence as military diſcipline, and attacked the Danes. A circumſtance was now diſplayed, of which, perhaps, the whole hiſtory of mankind cannot furniſh above two examples; the new-raiſed militia, in their firſt aſſault, equalled the intrepidity of veteran ſoldiers. Two regiments of theſe ill-armed peaſants cut in pieces the regiment of the King of Denmark's guards, of which there remained only ten men alive.

The Danes, entirely defeated, retired under the cannon of Helſinburg. The paſſage from Sweden to Zealand is ſo ſhort, that the King of Denmark received the news at Copenhagen of the defeat of his army in Sweden, the very ſame day on which it happened, and ſent his fleet to bring off the ſhattered remains of his army. The Danes quitted Sweden with precipitation five days after the battle; but being unable to carry off their horſes, and unwilling to leave them to the enemy, they killed them all in the environs of Helſinburg, and ſet fire to their proviſions, burning their corn and baggage, and leaving in Helſinburg four thouſand wounded men, of whom the greateſt part died with the infection occaſioned by ſo many dead horſes, and for want of proviſions, of which even their countrymen deprived them, to prevent the Swedes from enjoying them.

At

AT the ſame time the peaſants of Dalecarlia, having in the depths of their foreſts heard the report of their King's being a priſoner among the Turks, ſent a deputation to the Regency of Stockholm, and offered to go at their own expence, to the number of twenty thouſand, and deliver their maſter from the hands of his enemies. This propoſal, which was better calculated to diſplay their courage and affection to their King than to produce any real advantage, was received with pleaſure, though it was not accepted; and the Senators took care to acquaint the King with it, at the ſame time that they ſent him an account of the battle of Helſinburg.

CHARLES received this pleaſing news in his camp near Bender, in the month of July, 1710; and a little time after another event happened, which contributed ſtill more to ſtrengthen his hopes.

THE Grand Vizier Couprougli, who oppoſed all his deſigns, was depoſed about two months after he had entered into his office. The little court of Charles XII. and thoſe, who ſtill adhered to him in Poland, gave out that Charles made and unmade the Viziers, and governed the Turkiſh Empire from his retreat at Bender; but he had no ſhare in the diſgrace of that favourite. The rigid probity of the Vizier is ſaid to have been the ſole cauſe of his fall. His predeceſſor had not paid the Janiſſaries out of the imperial treaſury, but with the money he had raiſed by extortion:

tortion: Couprougli paid them out of the treaſury. Achmet reproached him with preferring the intereſt of the ſubject to that of the Emperor: "Your "predeceſſor, Chourlouli," ſaid he, "knew how "to find other means to pay my troops." "If," replied the Grand Vizier, "he had the art of enrich- "ing Your Highneſs by rapine, it is an art of which "I glory in being ignorant."

THE profound ſecrecy obſerved in the Seraglio ſeldom permits ſuch particulars to tranſpire to the public; but this fact was publiſhed at the ſame time with Couprougli's diſgrace. This Vizier's boldneſs, however, did not coſt him his head, becauſe true virtue can frequently cauſe itſelf to be reſpected, even by thoſe whom it offends. He was permitted to retire to the iſland of Negropont. Theſe particulars I learned from the letters of M. Bru, my relation, firſt interpreter to the Ottoman Porte, and I have related them in order to diſplay the true ſpirit of that government.

AFTER this the Grand Seignior recalled from Aleppo Baltagi Mehemet, Pacha of Syria, who had been Grand Vizier before Chourlouli. The *Baltagis* of the Seraglio, ſo called from *balta*, which ſignifies an axe, are ſlaves employed to cut wood for the uſe of the Princes of the Ottoman blood and the Sultanas. This Vizier had been a Baltagi in his youth, and had ever ſince retained the name of that office, according to the cuſtom of the Turks, who take, without bluſh-

ing, the name of their firſt profeſſion, or that of their father, or even of the place of their birth.

AT the time Baltagi Mehemet was a ſlave in the Seraglio, he was ſo happy as to do ſeveral little ſervices to Prince Achmet, who was then a priſoner of ſtate in the reign of his brother Muſtapha. it is permitted the Princes of the Ottoman blood to keep for their pleaſure a few women, who are paſt the age of child-bearing (an age that arrives very early in Turkey), but ſtill handſome enough to pleaſe. As ſoon as Achmet became Sultan, he gave one of theſe female ſlaves, whom he had ardently loved, in marriage to Baltagi Mehemet. This woman, by her intrigues, made her huſband Grand Vizier; another intrigue diſplaced him; and a third made him Grand Vizier again.

WHEN Baltagi Mehemet came to receive the Bull of the Empire, he found the party of the King of Sweden prevailing in the Seraglio. The Sultaneſs Validé; Ali-Coumourgi, the favourite of the Grand Seignior; the Kiſlar-Aga, Chief of the Black Eunuchs; and the Aga of the Janiſſaries, inclined to a war with the Czar: the Sultan was determined in the ſame reſolution; and the firſt order he gave the Grand Vizier was to go and attack the Muſcovites with two hundred thouſand men. Baltagi Mehemet had never made a campaign, yet he was not the idiot that Swediſh malcontents have repre-

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ſented him. He ſaid to the Grand Seignior, upon receiving a ſabre from him adorned with precious ſtones, "Your Highneſs knows that I was brought up to "handle an axe to cleave wood, and not a ſword to "command your armies: I will, notwithſtanding, do "my beſt to ſerve you, though ſhould I not ſucceed, "remember I have intreated you, beforehand, not to "impute the blame to me." The Sultan aſſured him of his friendſhip, and the Vizier prepared to carry his orders into execution.

THE firſt ſtep of the Ottoman Porte was to impriſon the Ruſſian Ambaſſador in the caſtle of the Seven Towers. It is the cuſtom of the Turks to begin by arreſting the Miniſters of thoſe Princes againſt whom they declare war. Strict obſervers of hoſpitality in every thing elſe, in this they violate the moſt ſacred law of nations. They commit this act of injuſtice under the pretext of equity, believing, or at leaſt deſirous to have it thought, that they never undertake any but juſt wars, becauſe they are conſecrated by the approbation of their Mufti. Upon this principle they take up arms, as they imagine, to chaſtiſe the breakers of treaties, of which they themſelves are often the firſt violators; and think they have a right to puniſh the Ambaſſadors of thoſe Kings, with whom they are at enmity, as being accomplices in the treachery of their maſters.

To

To this manner of reaſoning they join a ridiculous contempt, which they affect to entertain for Chriſtian Princes and their Ambaſſadors, the latter of whom they conſider in no other light than as the Conſuls of Merchants.

The Han of Crim Tartary, whom we call the Kam, received orders to hold himſelf in readineſs with forty thouſand Tartars. This Prince governs Nagai, Budziack, part of Circaſſia, and all Crim Tartary; a province known in antiquity by the name of Taurica Cherſoneſus, into which the Greeks carried their arms and commerce, and founded powerful cities, and into which the Genoeſe ſince penetrated, when they were maſters of the trade of Europe. In this country are to be ſeen the ruins of ſome Greek cities, and ſome monuments of the Genoeſe, which ſtill ſubſiſt in the midſt of deſolation and barbariſm.

The Kam is called Emperor by his own ſubjects; but this grand title does not make him leſs a ſlave of the Porte. The Ottoman blood, from which the Kams are ſprung, and the right they pretend to the Empire of the Turks, in caſe an heir ſhould be wanting to the throne, render their family reſpectable, and their perſons formidable, even to the Sultan himſelf. This is the reaſon that the Grand Seignior dares not venture to deſtroy the race of the Kams of Tartary, though indeed he ſeldom allows any of theſe Princes to reign to a great age. Their conduct is cloſely in-

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ſpected by the neighbouring Pachas, their dominions are ſurrounded with Janiſſaries, their inclinations thwarted by the Grand Viziers, and their deſigns always ſuſpected. If the Tartars complain of the Kam, the Porte depoſes him under that pretext; if he is too much beloved by his people, that is ſtill a higher crime, for which he is moſt certainly puniſhed. Thus almoſt all of them are driven from ſovereign power into exile, and end their days at Rhodes, which is generally their priſon and their grave.

THE Tartars their ſubjects, are the greateſt thieves on earth, and what appears impoſſible, are at the ſame time the moſt hoſpitable people. They will go fifty leagues to attack a caravan or pillage a village; yet when any ſtranger of any rank whatever, happens to travel through their country, he is not only received, lodged, and maintained every-where, but through whatever places he paſſes the inhabitants diſpute with each other the honour of having him for their gueſt; and the maſter of the houſe, his wife, and daughters, are ambitious to ſerve him. This inviolable regard to hoſpitality they have inherited from their anceſtors the Scythians, and they ſtill preſerve it on account of the ſmall number of ſtrangers that travel among them, and the low prices of all ſorts of proviſions, which render the practice of ſuch a virtue not exceedingly burthenſome.

WHEN

WHEN the Tartars go to war in conjunction with the Ottoman army, they are maintained by the Grand Seignior: but the booty they get is their only pay; and hence it is that they are much fitter for plundering than fighting.

THE Kam, won over by the preſents and intrigues of the King of Sweden, at firſt had obtained leave to appoint the general rendezvous of the troops at Bender, and even under the eye of Charles, in order to convince that Monarch that the war was undertaken ſolely for his ſake.

THE new Vizier Baltagi Mehemet, not lying under the ſame engagements, would not flatter a foreign Prince ſo highly. He changed this diſpoſition, and aſſembled this great army at Adrianople, on whoſe vaſt and fertile plains the Turks uſually draw up their armies, when going to make war upon the Chriſtians; there the troops that arrive from Aſia and Africa repoſe and refreſh themſelves for a few weeks. But the Grand Vizier, in order to be beforehand with the Czar, allowed the army but three days reſt, and then marched to the Danube, and from thence to Beſſarabia.

The Turkiſh troops at this day are not ſo formidable as they were in ancient times, when they conquered ſo many kingdoms in Aſia, Africa, and Europe; when, by the ſtrength of their body, their valour,

valour, and numbers, they triumphed over enemies leſs robuſt and worſe diſciplined than themſelves. But now that the Chriſtians are more expert in the art of war, in a pitched battle they almoſt always beat the Turks, and even with unequal numbers. If the Ottoman Empire hath made ſome conqueſts lately, it hath been only over the Republic of Venice, more eſteemed for wiſdom than for war, defended by ſtrangers, and little ſuccoured by the Chriſtian Princes, who are always divided among themſelves.

THE Janiſſaries and Spahis make their attack in a diſorderly manner, incapable of attending to the commands of their General, or rallying themſelves. Their cavalry, which ought to be excellent, conſidering the goodneſs and activity of their horſes, is not able to withſtand the ſhock of the German horſe; and their infantry did not yet know how to make uſe of fixed bayonets. Beſide all this, the Turks not having had an able General ſince the time of Couprougli, who conquered the Iſle of Candia; and a ſlave brought up in the idleneſs and ſolitude of a ſeraglio, made a Vizier through favour, and a General againſt his will, conducting an army raiſed in a hurry, without diſcipline or experience, againſt Ruſſian troops, hardened by twelve years war, and proud of having conquered the Swedes; the conſequence moſt probable was—That the Czar, to all appearance, muſt have vanquiſhed

quiſhed Baltagi Mehemet; but he was guilty of the ſame fault with regard to the Turks, which the King of Sweden had committed with reſpect to himſelf; he deſpiſed his enemy too much. On the firſt news of the Turkiſh preparations he left Moſcow, and, having given orders for turning the ſiege of Riga into a blockade, aſſembled fourſcore thouſand men on the frontiers of Poland*. With this army he took the road through Moldavia, and Walachia, formerly the country of the Dacians, but now inhabited by Greek chriſtians, tributaries to the Grand Seignior.

MOLDAVIA was, at that time, governed by Prince Cantemir, of Greek extraction, and who united in his perſon the talents of the ancient Greeks, the knowledge of letters and of arms. He was ſuppoſed to have been deſcended from the famous Timur, known by the name of Tamerlane. This origin appearing more honourable than a Greek one, they attempt to prove the reality of the deſcent by the name of this Conqueror *Timur*, ſay they, reſembles *Temir*; the title of *Kam*, which Timur poſſeſſed before he conquered Aſia, is included in the word *Cantemir*; therefore Prince Cantemir is de-

* *The Chaplain Norberg aſſerts, that the Czar compelled every fourth man in his dominions, able to bear arms, to follow him to the field. Had this been true, his army would have amounted, at leaſt, to two millions of men.*

ſcended

ſcended from Tamerlane. Such are the foundations of moſt genealogies!

But from whatever family Cantemir deſcended, he owed all his fortune to the Ottoman Porte. Yet ſcarcely had he received the inveſtiture of his principality, when he betrayed the Turkiſh Emperor, his benefactor, to the Czar, from whom he expected greater advantages. He flattered himſelf that the conqueror of Charles XII. would eaſily triumph over a Vizier of ſo little reputation, who had never made a campaign, and who had choſen for his Kiaia, that is to ſay his Lieutenant, the Intendant of the Cuſtoms in Turkey. He made no doubt but all the Greeks would readily follow his ſtandard, as the Greek Patriarchs had encouraged him in this revolt. The Czar, therefore, having made a ſecret treaty with this Prince, and received him into his army, advanced into the country; and in the month of June 1711, arrived on the northern banks of the river Hieraſus, now Pruth, near Jaſſy, the capital of Moldavia.

As ſoon as the Grand Vizier heard that Peter Alexiowitz was advancing on that ſide, he immediately quitted his camp, and following the courſe of the Danube, reſolved to croſs the river on a bridge of boats, near to a town called Saccia, at the ſame place where Darius formerly built the bridge that went by his name. The Turkiſh army uſed ſuch diligence, that

they ſoon came in ſight of the Muſcovites, the river Pruth lying between them.

THE Czar, ſure of the Prince of Moldavia, never thought that the Moldavians would fail him. But the Prince and his ſubjects have very often different intereſts. The Moldavians preferred the Turkiſh Government, which is never fatal to the great, and which affects a great lenity and mildneſs to its tributary States: they dreaded the Chriſtians, and eſpecially the Muſcovites, who had always treated them with inhumanity; they therefore carried all their proviſions to the Ottoman army: the contractors alſo, who had engaged to furniſh the Ruſſians with proviſions, executed in favour of the Grand Vizier the very agreement, which they had made with the Czar. The Walachians, neighbours to the Moldavians, diſcovered the ſame attachment to the Turks; ſo much had the remembrance of the Ruſſian cruelties alienated all their minds.

THE Czar, thus deceived in his hopes, which perhaps he had too eagerly entertained, ſaw his army, on a ſudden, deſtitute of forage and proviſions. The ſoldiers deſerted in troops, and his army was ſoon reduced to leſs than thirty thouſand men ready to periſh with hunger. The Czar experienced the ſame misfortunes upon the banks of the Pruth, in having truſted himſelf to Cantemir, as Charles XII. had done at Pultowa, in relying upon Mazeppa. Meanwhile the Turks

Turks paſſed the river, hemmed in the Ruſſians, and formed an entrenched camp before them. It is ſurprizing that the Czar did not diſpute their paſſage, or, at leaſt, repair this error by attacking the Turks immediately after their landing, inſtead of giving them time to deſtroy his army with hunger and fatigue. It would ſeem, indeed, that Peter did every thing in this campaign to haſten his own ruin. He found himſelf without proviſions, having the river Pruth behind him, an hundred and fifty thouſand Turks before him, and forty thouſand Tartars continually haraſſing his army on the right and left. In this extremity he openly ſaid, "Here am I, at leaſt in as bad a ſituation as my brother Charles was at Pultowa."

COUNT PONIATOWSKY, an indefatigable agent of the King of Sweden, was in the Grand Vizier's army, together with ſome Poles and Swedes, who all imagined the ruin of the Czar to be inevitable.

As ſoon as Poniatowſky ſaw that the armies muſt infallibly come to an engagement, he ſent to the King of Sweden, who immediately ſet out from Bender, accompanied by forty Officers, enjoying in idea the pleaſure he ſhould have in fighting the Emperor of Muſcovy. After many loſſes and ſeveral deſtructive marches, the Czar was driven back to the Pruth, having no other intrenchment than a *chevaux de friſe* and a few waggons. A few troops of the Janiſſaries and Spahis attacked his army ſo diſadvantageouſly ſituated;

they ſoon came in ſight of the [illegible] diſorderly, and the Pruth lying between them [illegible] with a firmneſs, which [illegible], added to their deſpair,

THE Czar, ſure [illegible] thought that the [illegible] Prince and his [illegible] twice repulſed. Next day M. reſts. The [illegible] the Grand Vizier to ſtarve the vernment, [illegible] which being in want of every thing affects a [illegible] with the Emperor, be obliged in a States: [illegible] to ſurrender at diſcretion. the M[illegible] inh[illegible] tc[illegible] The Czar hath ſince that time more than once declared, that in his whole life he never felt any thing ſo tormenting as the agitation in which he paſſed that night; he revolved in his thoughts, that all he had been doing for ſo many years to promote the glory and happineſs of his country, that ſo many grand undertakings, which had always been interrupted by wars, were now, perhaps, going to periſh with him, before they were fully accompliſhed; and that he muſt either be deſtroyed by famine, or attack about an hundred and eighty thouſand men with feeble and diſpirited troops, diminiſhed one half in their number, the cavalry almoſt entirely diſmounted, and the infantry exhauſted with hunger and fatigue.

IN the beginning of the night he had ſent for General Czcremetoff, and ordered him without deliberation, or taking his opinion, to have every thing in readineſs at the break of day for attacking the Turks with fixed bayonets.

HE

rewiſe gave the moſt poſitive orders that all
ge ſhould be burnt, and that every officer
ep but one waggon, in order that, if they
onquered, the enemy might not obtain the
y they expected.

HAVING regulated every thing with the General
the battle, he retired to his tent, oppreſſed with
eſs, and agitated with convulſions, a diſorder with
ich he was often attacked, and which always re-
ned with redoubled violence when he was under
perturbation of mind. He gave orders that no
e ſhould dare to enter his tent in the night, on any
ount whatever; not chuſing to receive any remon-
nce againſt a reſolution which, though deſperate,
neceſſary; and ſtill leſs that any one ſhould be a
neſs of the diſtreſſed ſituation in which he found
ſelf.

In the mean time the greateſt part of the baggage
s burnt, as he had ordered. The whole army fol-
ed the example, though with much reluctance; and
eral buried their moſt valuable effects in the earth.
e General Officers had already given orders for the
ch, and were endeavouring to inſpire the army
h that confidence, which they themſelves wanted;
the whole ſoldiery, exhauſted with hunger and
gue, marched without ſpirit or hope. The women,
h which the army was needleſsly crowded, ſet up
moſt lamentable cries, which contributed ſtill more

to

to enervate the men; and next morning every one expected death or ſlavery as the only alternative. This deſcription is by no means exaggerated, it is exactly conformable to the accounts that were given by Officers, who ſerved in the army.

THERE was at that time in the Ruſſian camp a woman as extraordinary, perhaps as the Czar himſelf. She was then only known by the name of Catharine. Her mother was a poor country-woman, called Erb-Magden, of the village of Ringen in Eſthonia, a province where the people were ſerfs or glebe-ſlaves, and which was then under the government of the Swedes. She never diſcovered her father, and had been baptized by the name of Martha. The Vicar of the Pariſh, out of charity, brought her up to the age of fourteen; at which age ſhe went to ſervice at Marienbourg, at the houſe of a Lutheran Miniſter of that country called Gluk.

IN 1702, being then eighteen years of age, ſhe married a Swediſh dragoon. The day after her marriage, a party of the Swediſh troops having been beat by the Muſcovites, the dragoon, who was in the action, was miſſing, nor could his wife diſcover whether he had been made priſoner, nor indeed at any time afterwards learn what was become of him.

A FEW days after ſhe was made a priſoner herſelf by General Baur; in whoſe ſervice ſhe ſtaid ſome time, and

and afterwards in that of Marſchal Czeremetoff, by whom ſhe was given to Menzikoff, a man who experienced the greateſt viciſſitudes of fortune, having been raiſed from a paſtry-cook's boy to the rank of a General and a Prince, but who was at laſt ſtripped of every honour, and baniſhed into Siberia, where he died in miſery and deſpair.

It was at a ſupper given by Prince Menzikoff that the Emperor firſt ſaw her, and inſtantly became enamoured of her. He privately married her in the year 1707; not ſeduced to it by female artifices, but becauſe he thought he had met with a woman capable of ſeconding his ſchemes, and even of maintaining them after his death. He had long before divorced his firſt wife Ottokeſa, the daughter of a Boyard, who was accuſed of oppoſing the alterations which he made in his dominions; a crime in the eyes of the Czar the moſt unpardonable, as he would ſuffer nobody in his family whoſe thoughts did not agree with his own. He thought he had now found in this foreign ſlave the qualities of a ſovereign, though ſhe had none of the virtues of her ſex: he however, for her ſake, diſdained the prejudices that would have governed a man of common ideas, and therefore had her crowned Empreſs. The ſame talents which made her the wife of Peter Alexiowitz, procured her the empire after the death of her huſband. Europe hath beheld with ſurprize this woman, who was never able to read

read * or write, and compenſating for her education and her weakneſſes by her firmneſs, and filling with glory the throne of a legiſlator.

At the time ſhe married the Czar, ſhe renounced the Lutheran religion, in which ſhe had been born, for that of Muſcovy; in which religion ſhe was re-baptized, according to the rites of the Ruſſian church, and inſtead of the name of Martha ſhe took that of Catharine, by which ſhe was ever after known. This woman happening to be in the camp at Pruth, ſhe held a council with the General Officers and the Vice-Chancellor Schaffirof, while the Czar was in his tent.

In this conference it was reſolved to aſk a peace of the Turks, and endeavour to perſuade the Czar to agree to it. The Vice-Chancellor wrote a letter to the Grand Vizier in his maſter's name, which letter

* *The Sieur de la Mottraye pretends that ſhe had a good education, and could both read and write very well. The contrary of this is known to all the world. The peaſants of Livonia are never permitted to learn either to read or write, owing to an ancient privilege, which is termed the benefit of clergy, formerly eſtabliſhed among the barbarians, who were converted to chriſtianity, and ſtill ſubſiſting in this country. The memoirs from which this anecdote is taken farther add, that the Princeſs Elizabeth, afterwards Empreſs, always ſigned for her mother, from the time ſhe could write.*

the

the Czarina carried into the Emperor's tent, notwithſtanding his prohibition; and having by tears and entreaties prevailed upon him to ſign it, ſhe immediately collected all her jewels, money, and moſt valuable effects, and even borrowed of the General Officers; which ſum being amaſſed formed a conſiderable preſent: ſhe then ſent it, with the letter ſigned by the Czar, to Oſman Aga, Lieutenant to the Grand Vizier. Mehemet Baltagi at firſt anſwered with the lofty air of a Vizier and a conqueror, "Let the Czar "ſend me his Prime Miniſter, and I ſhall then con-"ſider what is to be done." The Vice-Chancellor Schaffirof, upon this, immediately ſet off to the Turkiſh camp, provided with ſome preſents, which he publicly offered to the Grand Vizier, ſufficient to ſhew him they ſtood in need of his clemency, but too inconſiderable to corrupt his integrity.

The firſt demand the Vizier made was, that the Czar ſhould ſurrender at diſcretion with the whole army. The Vice-Chancellor replied, that his maſter was going to attack him in a quarter of an hour, and that the Ruſſians would periſh to a man, rather than ſubmit to ſuch infamous conditions. Oſman joined his remonſtrances to the demand of Schaffirof.

Mehemet Baltagi was no warrior; he ſaw that the Janiſſaries had been repulſed the evening before, ſo that Oſman eaſily prevailed on him not to expoſe to the hazard of a battle ſuch certain advantages. He

therefore granted at firſt a ſuſpenſion of hoſtilities for ſix hours, during which they ſhould agree upon the conditions of the treaty.

During the parley, there happened a little incident, which may ſerve to ſhew that the Turks often pay more regard to their word than is in general imagined. Two Italian gentlemen, relations of M. Brillo, Lieutenant-colonel of a regiment of grenadiers in the Czar's ſervice, having gone in queſt of forage, were taken priſoners by ſome Tartars, who brought them to the camp, and offered to ſell them to an Officer of the Janiſſaries. The Turk, enraged at their daring to violate the truce, arreſted the Tartars, and carried them himſelf before the Grand Vizier, together with the two priſoners.

The Vizier ſent back the two gentlemen to the Czar's camp, and ordered the Tartars, who had been chiefly concerned in the tranſaction, to be beheaded.

In the mean time the Kam of Tartary oppoſed the concluſion of the treaty, which would deprive him of all hopes of plunder; Poniatowſky ſeconded the Kam with the moſt perſuaſive arguments: but Oſman carried his point againſt the importunity of the Tartar, and the inſinuations of Poniatowſky.

The Vizier thought, that by concluding an advantageous peace, he ſhould ſufficiently ſerve his maſter;

He

He inſiſted that the Muſcovities ſhould deliver up Azoph, burn the gallies which lay in that harbour, demoliſh the important citadels built upon the Palus Mæotis, and give the cannon and ammunition of all thoſe fortreſſes into the hands of the Grand Seignior; that the Czar ſhould withdraw his troops from Poland; that he ſhould not incommode the little number of Coſſacks that were under the protection of the Poles, nor thoſe, who depended on the Turks; and that for the future he ſhould pay the Tartars a ſubſidy of forty thouſand ſequins a-year; a diſagreeable tribute impoſed a long time paſt, but from which the Czar had delivered his country.

At laſt the treaty was going to be ſigned, without ſo much as making mention of the King of Sweden. All that Poniatowſky could obtain of the Vizier was, to inſert an article, by which the Czar engaged not to incommode Charles in his return; and what is very remarkable, it was ſtipulated in this article, that the Czar and the King of Sweden ſhould be at liberty to make peace, if they wiſhed it, and if they could agree upon the conditions.

On theſe conditions the Czar was permitted to retire with his army, cannon, artillery, colours and baggage. The Turks furniſhed him with proviſions, ſo that he had plenty of every thing in his camp two hours after the ſigning of the treaty, which was begun.

gun, concluded, and ſigned, the twenty-firſt day of July, 1711.

JUST as the Czar, now extricated from this terrible dilemma, was marching off with drums beating and colours flying, the King of Sweden arrived, impatient for the fight, and to behold his enemy in his power. He had ridden above fifty leagues from Bender to Jaſſy. He arrived the very moment the Ruſſians were beginning to retire in peace; but he could not penetrate to the Turkiſh camp without paſſing the Pruth by a bridge three leagues diſtant. Charles, who never did any thing like other men, ſwam acroſs the river, at the hazard of being drowned, and traverſed the Ruſſian camp at the riſk of being taken; he, however, reached the Turkiſh army, and alighted at the tent of Poniatowſky, who has related this fact to me both in converſation and in his correſpondence. The Count came to him with a melancholy air, and told him, that he had loſt an opportunity, which, perhaps, he would never be able to recover.

THE King, fired with reſentment, ran immediately to the tent of the Grand Vizier, and, with an inflamed countenance, reproached him with the treaty he had concluded. "I have a right," ſays the Grand Vizier with a calm air, "to make peace or war." "But," adds the King, "had you not the whole "Ruſſian army in your power?" "Our law orders" anſwers the Vizier gravely, "to give peace to our "enemies,

"enemies, when they implore our mercy." "And "does it command you" refumes the King in a paſſion, "to make a bad treaty, when you may impoſe what "laws you pleaſe? Did it not depend upon you to "lead the Czar priſoner to Conſtantinople?"

THE Turk, driven to extremity, replied drily, "And who would have governed his empire in his "abſence? It is not proper that all Kings ſhould "leave their dominions." Charles made no other anſwer than by a ſmile of indignation. He then threw himſelf down upon a ſopha, and, eying the Vizier with an air of contempt and reſentment, ſtretched out his leg, and entangling his ſpur in the Turk's robe, purpoſely tore it; after which he roſe up, remounted his horſe, and with deſpair in his heart returned to Bender.

PONIATOWSKY continued ſome time longer with the Grand Vizier, to try if he could prevail upon him, by more gentle means, to extort greater conceſſions from the Czar; but the hour of prayer being come, the Turk, without anſwering a ſingle word, went to waſh and to ſay his prayers.



BOOK

BOOK VI.

ARGUMENT.

Intrigues at the Ottoman Porte.—The Kam of Tartary and the Pacha of Bender endeavour to force Charles to depart.—He defends himſelf with forty Domeſtics againſt a whole Army.—Is taken and treated as a Priſoner.

THE fortune of the King of Sweden, ſo changed from what it had been, perſecuted him even in the moſt trivial circumſtances. He found on his return, his little camp at Bender, and all his apartments, overflowed by the waters of the Nieſter: he therefore retired to the diſtance of a few miles, near to the village called Varnitza: and, as if he had had a ſecret foreboding of what was to befal him, he there built a large houſe of ſtone, capable, on occaſion, to ſuſtain an aſſault for ſome hours. He even furniſhed it magnificently, contrary to his uſual cuſtom, in order to command reſpect from the Turks.

He likewiſe built two other houſes, one for his chancery, and the other for his favourite Grothuſen, who kept a table at the King's expence. While the King was thus employed in building near Bender, as if

if he had intended always to remain in Turkey, Baltagi Mehemet, dreading more than ever the intrigues and complaints of this Prince at the Porte, had ſent the Reſident of the Emperor of Germany to Vienna, to demand a free paſſage for the King of Sweden, through the hereditary dominions of the Houſe of Auſtria. This Envoy in three weeks returned with a promiſe from the Imperial Regency, that the honours, which were due to him ſhould be paid to Charles XII. and that he ſhould be ſafely conducted to Pomerania.

APPLICATION was made to the Regency of Vienna, becauſe Charles the Emperor of Germany, who had ſucceeded Joſeph, was then in Spain, diſputing the crown of that kingdom with Philip V. While the German Envoy was executing this commiſſion at Vienna, the Grand Vizier ſent three Pachas to the King of Sweden, to ſignify to him that he muſt quit the Turkiſh dominions.

THE King, who had been informed of the orders with which they were charged, cauſed immediate notice to be given to them, that if they preſumed to make him any propoſals contrary to his honour, or to the reſpect which was due to him, he would have them all three hanged that very moment. The Pacha of Theſſalonica, who delivered the meſſage, diſguiſed the harſhneſs of the commiſſion under the moſt reſpectful terms. Charles finiſhed the audience without deigning

deigning to return the leaſt anſwer. His Chancellor Mullern, who remained with the three Pachas, briefly explained to them his maſter's refuſal, which already they ſufficiently comprehended by his ſilence.

THE Grand Vizier did not give up the point; he ordered Iſmael Pacha, the new Seraſkier of Bender, to threaten the King with the Sultan's indignation, if he did not make his determination without delay. This Seraſkier was a man of a mild temper and engaging addreſs, which had gained him the good will of Charles, and the friendſhip of all the Swedes. The King entered into conference with him; but it was only to tell him, that he would not depart, till Achmet had granted him two demands; the puniſhment of his Grand Vizier, and an hundred thouſand men to return with him into Poland.

BALTAGI MEHEMET knew very well that Charles remained in Turkey only to ruin him; he took care to plant guards along all the roads from Bender to Conſtantinople, to intercept the King's letters. He did more, he retrenched his "thaim," that is to ſay, the proviſion with which the Porte furniſhes thoſe Princes, to whom ſhe grants an aſylum. That of the King of Sweden was immenſe, conſiſting of five hundred crowns a-day in money, and a profuſion of every thing that could contribute to maintain a court in ſplendour and affluence.

As

As ſoon as the King underſtood that the Vizier had preſumed to retrench his allowance, he turned to the ſteward of his houſehold, and ſaid, "Hitherto you "have only had two tables, but I command you to "have four from to-morrow."

THE Officers of Charles XII. were accuſtomed to eſteem nothing impoſſible which their maſter ordered; at preſent, however, they had neither money nor proviſions, and were obliged to borrow at twenty, thirty, and forty per cent. of the officers, domeſtics, and janiſſaries, who were grown rich by the profuſion of the King. M. Fabricius the Envoy of Holſtein, Jeffreys the Miniſter of England, with their Secretaries, and friends, gave all that they had. The King, with his uſual ſtatelineſs, and without any concern about the morrow, ſubſiſted on theſe preſents, which could not have ſufficed him long. It was therefore neceſſary to elude the vigilance of the guards, and to ſend ſecretly to Conſtantinople, to borrow money of the European merchants. All refuſed to lend money to a King, who ſeemed to have put himſelf out of a condition ever to repay them. One Engliſh merchant alone, named Cook, ventured to lend him about forty thouſand crowns, being content to loſe them in caſe of the King of Sweden's death. This money was brought to the King's little camp, juſt as they began to be in want of every thing, and without hopes of any relief.

In this interval M. Poniatowſky wrote, from the very camp of the Grand Vizier, a relation of the campaign at Pruth, in which he accuſed Baltagi Mehemet of cowardice and treachery. An old Janiſſary, provoked at the weakneſs of the Vizier, and gained moreover by the preſents of Poniatowſky, undertook to deliver this account, and, having obtained leave of abſence, preſented the letter with his own hand to the Sultan.

Poniatowsky, a few days after, left the camp, and repaired to the Ottoman Porte, to form intrigues againſt the Grand Vizier, according to his uſual cuſtom.

Circumstances were favourable. The Czar, finding himſelf at liberty, did not hurry himſelf to perform his engagements; the keys of Azoph did not arrive; the Grand Vizier, who was anſwerable for them, and who, with reaſon, dreaded the indignation of his maſter, did not dare to appear in his preſence.

The Seraglio at that time was filled more than ever with intrigues and factions. Theſe cabals, which exiſt in all courts, and which in European courts commonly end with the diſmiſſion of the Miniſter, or at moſt in his baniſhment, never fail at Conſtantinople to occaſion the loſs of more than one head: they proved fatal to the old Vizier Chourlouli, and

and to Oſman, that Lieutenant of Baltagi Mehemet, who was the principal author of the peace of Pruth, and afterwards obtained a conſiderable poſt at the Porte. Among Oſman's treaſures were found the Czarina's ring, and twenty thouſand pieces of gold of the Saxon and Ruſſian coin; which were proofs that money alone had ſaved the Czar of Muſcovy from the precipice, and ruined the affairs of Charles XII. The Vizier Baltagi Mehemet was baniſhed to the Iſle of Lemnos, where he died three years after. The Sultan did not ſeize his effects, either at his baniſhment or at his death. He was far from being rich, and his poverty is a juſtification of his character.

To this Grand Vizier ſucceeded Juſſuf, that is to ſay Joſeph, whoſe fortune was as extraordinary as that of his predeceſſors. He was born on the frontiers of Muſcovy, he was taken priſoner at ſix years of age, together with his family, and had been ſold to a Janiſſary. He had been for ſome time a ſervant in the Seraglio, and at laſt became the ſecond perſon in that very empire wherein he had been a ſlave; but he was only the ſhadow of a Miniſter. The young Selictar-Ali-Coumourgi elevated him to that ſlippery poſt, only while he waited for an occaſion to fill it himſelf; and Juſſuf, his creature, had nothing to do but to ſet the ſeals of the empire to the will of this favourite. The politics of the Ottoman Court ſeemed to undergo a total alteration, from the very beginning of this

Vizier's

Vizier's adminiſtration: the Czar's Plenipotentiaries, who remained at Conſtantinople, both as Ambaſſadors and as hoſtages, were treated better than ever; the Grand Vizier confirmed with them the peace of the Pruth; but that which mortified the King of Sweden above all was, to hear that the ſecret alliance made with the Czar at Conſtantinople, was brought about by the mediation of the Ambaſſadors of England and Holland.

CONSTANTINOPLE, ſince the time of Charles's retreat to Bender, was become what Rome hath ſo often been, the centre of the negociations of Chriſtendom. Count des Alleurs, the Ambaſſador from France, ſupported here the intereſts of Charles and Staniſlaus; the Miniſter of the Emperor of Germany oppoſed them; and the ſame colliſions prevailed here between the Swediſh and Muſcovite factions, with which we have long ſeen the Court of Rome agitated by thoſe of France and Spain.

ENGLAND and Holland, who ſeemed to be neuter, were not ſo in reality; the new commerce, which the Czar had opened at Peterſburg attracted the attention of theſe two commercial nations.

THE Engliſh and Dutch will be always for that Prince, who ſhall moſt favour their trade. There was much to obtained from the Czar, and therefore it is not ſurprizing that the Miniſters of England and Holland

ſaid ſhould ſerve him ſecretly at the Ottoman Porte. One of the conditions of this new alliance was, that Charles ſhould be immediately obliged to quit the Turkiſh Empire; whether it was that the Czar hoped to ſeize his perſon on the road, or that he thought Charles leſs formidable in his own kingdom than in Turkey, where he was always on the point of arming the Ottoman troops againſt the Ruſſian Empire.

THE King of Sweden was continually ſoliciting the Porte to ſend him back through Poland with a numerous army. The Divan, in fact, reſolved to ſend him back with a ſimple guard of ſeven or eight thouſand men, not as a King whom they wiſhed to aſſiſt, but as a gueſt whom they wanted to get rid of. For this purpoſe the Sultan Achmet wrote to him in theſe terms:

"*Most powerful among the Kings, adorers of Jeſus, Re-*
"*dreſſer of wrongs and injuries, and Protector of*
"*juſtice in the Ports and Republics of the South and*
"*North; ſhining in Majeſty, friend of honour and*
"*glory, and of our Sublime Porte, CHARLES KING*
"*OF SWEDEN, whoſe enterprizes God crown with*
"*ſucceſs.*

"As ſoon as the moſt illuſtrious Achmet, formerly
"Chiaoux-Pachi, ſhall have the honour to preſent you
"with this letter, adorned with our Imperial Seal, be
"perſuaded and convinced of the truth of our inten-
"tions

THE bad policy of the Porte in having always, through vanity, Ambaſſadors from the Chriſtian Princes at Conſtantinople, and not maintaining a ſingle agent at the Chriſtian Courts, is the cauſe that theſe diſcover and ſometimes conduct the moſt ſecret reſolutions of the Sultan, and that the Divan is always in profound ignorance of what is publicly going on in the Chriſtian world.

THE Sultan, ſhut up in his Seraglio among his women and ennuchs, can ſee only with the eyes of the Grand Vizier: that Miniſter, as inacceſſible as his maſter, wholly engroſſed with the intrigues of the Seraglio, and having no foreign correſpondence, is commonly deceived himſelf, or elſe deceives the Sultan, who depoſes, or orders him to be ſtrangled for the firſt fault, in order to chuſe another Miniſter as ignorant, or as perfidious, who behaves like his predeceſſors, and ſoon ſhares the ſame fate.

SUCH for the moſt part is the inactivity and the profound ſecurity of this Court, that were the Chriſtian Princes to league themſelves againſt it, their fleets might be at the Dardanelles, and their land forces at the gates of Adrianople, before the Turks would dream of defending themſelves; but the different intereſts, which will ever divide the Chriſtian world, will preſerve the Turks from a fate, to which, by their want of policy, and by their ignorance of the art of war both by ſea and land, they ſeem at preſent expoſed.

ACHMET

ACHMET was ſo little informed of what paſſed in Poland, that he ſent an Aga to ſee whether it was true that the Czar's troops were ſtill in that country: the King of Sweden's two Secretaries, who underſtood the Turkiſh language, accompanied the Aga, and were to ſerve as witneſſes againſt him, in caſe he ſhould make a falſe report.

THIS Aga ſaw the truth of the King's aſſertion with his own eyes, and informed the Sultan of every particular. Achmet, fired with indignation, was going to ſtrangle the Grand Vizier; but the favourite, who protected him, and who thought he ſhould have occaſion for him, obtained his pardon, and ſupported him ſome time longer in the miniſtry.

THE Ruſſians were now openly eſpouſed by the Vizier, and ſecretly by Ali-Coumourgi, who had changed ſides; but the Sultan was ſo provoked, the infraction of the treaty was ſo manifeſt, and the Janiſſaries, who often make the miniſters, the favourites, and even the Sultans tremble, demanded war with ſuch clamour, that no one in the Seraglio durſt offer a more moderate propoſal.

THE Grand Seignior immediately committed to the Seven Towers the Ruſſian Ambaſſadors, who were now as much accuſtomed to go to priſon as to an audience. War was declared afreſh againſt the Czar, the horſe-tails were diſplayed, and orders were given to all the

Pachas to aſſemble an army of two hundred thouſand men. The Sultan himſelf quitted Conſtantinople, and went to fix his court at Adrianople, that he might be nearer to the ſeat of war.

In the mean time a ſolemn embaſſy, ſent to the Grand Seignior by Auguſtus and the Republic of Poland, was advancing on the road to Adrianople. At the head of the embaſſy was the Palatine of Mazovia, with a retinue of above three hundred perſons.

Every one that compoſed the embaſſy was ſeized and impriſoned in one of the ſuburbs of the city: never was the King of Sweden's party more ſanguine than on this occaſion; and yet this great preparation was rendered uſeleſs, and all their hopes were again diſappointed.

If we may believe a public miniſter, a man of ſagacity and penetration, who reſided at that time at Conſtantinople, young Coumourgi had already other deſigns in his head than that of diſputing a deſert country with the Czar by a doubtful war. He had propoſed to ſtrip the Venetians of the Peloponneſus, now called the Morea, and to make himſelf maſter of Hungary.

He waited only for the execution of his great deſigns till he ſhould have attained the poſt of Grand Vizier, from which he was ſtill excluded on account of his youth,

youth. In this view it was more for his advantage to be the ally than the enemy of the Czar. It was neither his intereſt nor his inclination to keep the King of Sweden any longer, and ſtill leſs to arm the Turkiſh empire in his favour. He not only deſired to diſmiſs that Prince, but he openly ſaid that for the future no Chriſtian Ambaſſador ought to be ſuffered at Conſtantinople; that all theſe Miniſters in ordinary were but ſo many honourable ſpies, who corrupted or betrayed the Viziers, and had too long influenced the intrigues of the Seraglio; and that the Franks ſettled at Pera, and in the Streights of the Levant, were merchants, who needed a Conſul only, and not an Ambaſſador. The Grand Vizier, who owed his poſt and his life to the favourite, and, what was more, ſtood in fear of him, complied with his intention with the more alacrity, as he had ſold himſelf to the Ruſſians, and hoped by this means to be revenged on the King of Sweden, who had endeavoured to ruin him. The Mufti, a creature of Ali-Coumourgi, was alſo the ſlave to his will: he had adviſed the war with Ruſſia, when the favourite wiſhed it; but the moment this young man changed his opinion, he pronounced it to be unjuſt: thus was the army hardly aſſembled before they began to liſten to propoſals of accommodation. The Vice-Chancellor Schaffirof, and young Czeremetoff, hoſtages and plenipotentiaries of the Czar at the Porte, promiſed, after ſeveral negociations, that the Czar ſhould withdraw his troops from Poland. The Grand Vizier, who well knew that the Czar would never

never execute this treaty, made no ſcruple to ſign it; and the Sultan, ſatisfied with having in appearance impoſed laws on the Ruſſians, remained ſtill at Adrianople. Thus, in leſs than ſix months, was peace ratified with the Czar, war declared, and peace renewed again.

The principal article of all theſe treaties was to oblige the King of Sweden to depart. The Sultan, however, was not willing to endanger his own honour, and that of the Ottoman Empire, by expoſing the King to the riſk of his being taken by his enemies on the road. It was ſtipulated that he ſhould depart, but on condition that the Ambaſſadors of Poland and Muſcovy ſhould be reſponſible for the ſafety of his perſon: theſe Ambaſſadors accordingly ſwore, in the name of their maſters, that neither the Czar nor the King of Poland ſhould moleſt him on his journey; and Charles was to engage, on his part, that he would not attempt to excite any commotions in Poland. The Divan having thus ſettled the fate of Charles, Iſmael, Seraſkier of Bender, repaired to Varnitza, where the King was encamped, to acquaint him with the reſolution of the Porte, inſinuating to him, with great addreſs, that there was no longer time for delay, and that he muſt neceſſarily depart.

Charles made no other anſwer than that the Grand Seignior had promiſed him an army, and not a guard, and that Kings ought to keep their word.

In

In the mean time General Fleming, the Minister and favourite of Augustus, maintained a secret correspondence with the Kam of Tartary and the Seraskier of Bender. La Mare, a French gentleman, a Colonel in the service of Saxony, had made more than one journey from Bender to Dresden, and all these journies were suspicious.

At this very time the King of Sweden caused a Courier, whom Fleming had sent to the Tartarian Prince, to be arrested on the frontiers of Walachia. The letters were brought to him, and decyphered; from whence it clearly appeared that a correspondence was carried on between the Tartars and the Court of Dresden; but the letters were conceived in such ambiguous and general terms, that it was difficult to discover, whether Augustus only intended to detach the Turks from the interest of Sweden, or whether he meant that the Kam should deliver Charles to his Saxons as he conducted him back to Poland.

It seems hard to believe that a Prince so generous as Augustus, would, by seizing the person of the King of Sweden, endanger the lives of his Ambassadors, and of three hundred Polish gentlemen, who were detained at Adrianople as pledges for Charles's safety.

But on the other hand it is well known, that Fleming, the absolute Minister of Augustus, was a subtle man, and not very scrupulous. The outrages committed

mitted on the King Elector by the King of Sweden might ſeem to render any revenge excuſable; and it might be thought, that if the Court of Dreſden could buy Charles from the Kam of Tartary, they would eaſily purchaſe the liberty of the Poliſh hoſtages at the Ottoman Porte.

ALL theſe reaſons were diſcuſſed by the King, Mullern his Privy Chancellor, and Grothuſen his favourite. They read the letters again and again; and, their unhappy ſituation making them more ſuſpicious, they reſolved to believe the worſt.

A FEW days after, the King was confirmed in his ſuſpicions by the precipitate departure of Count Sapieha, who had taken refuge with him, and now quitted him abruptly, to go to Poland to throw himſelf into the arms of Auguſtus. In any other ſituation he would have regarded Sapieha only as a malcontent; but in his preſent delicate condition he did not heſitate to believe him a traitor. The repeated importunites, with which they now preſſed him to depart, converted his ſuſpicions into certainty. The obſtinacy of his temper coinciding with theſe appearances, confirmed him in the opinion that they intended to betray him and deliver him up to his enemies, though this plot hath never been fully proved.

HE might deceive himſelf in ſuppoſing that Auguſtus had made a bargain with the Tartars for his perſon; but

but he was much more deceived in relying on the ſuccours of the Ottoman Court. Be that as it will, he reſolved to gain time.

He told the Pacha of Bender, that he could not depart without having money to pay his debts; for though his "thaim" had for a long time been reſtored to him, his liberality had always obliged him to borrow. The Pacha aſked him how much he wanted. The King replied, at a hazard, a thouſand purſes, amounting to fifteen hundred thouſand livres of our money in the beſt coin. The Pacha wrote to the Porte; and the Sultan, in the room of a thouſand purſes, which Charles had aſked, ſent twelve hundred, and wrote to the Pacha the following letter:

Letter from the Grand Seignior *to the* Pacha *of* Bender.

"THE purport of this Imperial letter is to acquaint "you, that upon your repreſentation and recommen- "dation, and upon that of the moſt noble Delvet- "Gherai-Kam to our Sublime Porte, our Imperial "munificence hath granted a thouſand purſes to the "King of Sweden, which ſhall be ſent to Bender, "under the care and conduct of the moſt illuſtrious "Mehemet Pacha, formerly Chiaoux-Pachi, to re- "main in your cuſtody till the time of the departure "of the King of Sweden, whoſe ſteps God direct,

"and

" and then to be given to him, together with two " hundred purſes more, as an overplus of our Impe- " rial liberality, which exceeds his demands.

" WITH regard to the route of Poland, which he " is determined to take, you and the Kam, who are " to accompany him, ſhall take ſuch wiſe and prudent " meaſures as may, during the whole journey, pre- " vent, as well the troops under your command as " the retinue of the King of Sweden from commit- " ting any outrage, or being guilty of any action that " may be reputed contrary to the peace, which ſtill " ſubſiſts between our Sublime Porte and the king- " dom and Republic of Poland, to the end the King " may paſs as a friend under our protection.

" BY doing this (which you muſt expreſsly recom- " mend to him to do) he will receive on the part of " the Poles every honour and reſpect due to his Ma- " jeſty; of which we have been aſſured by the Am- " baſſadors of King Auguſtus and the Republic, who, " on this condition, have even offered themſelves, " together with ſeveral other Poliſh nobles, if we " required it, as hoſtages for the ſecurity of his " paſſage.

" WHEN the time which you, together with the " moſt noble Delvet-Gherai, ſhall fix for the march " ſhall arrive, you ſhall put yourſelf at the head of " your brave ſoldiers, among whom ſhall be the Tar-

" tars,

" tars, having the Kam at their head; and you " ſhall then conduct the King of Sweden with his " retinue.

" So may it pleaſe the only God the Almighty " to direct your ſteps and theirs. The Pacha of Aulos " ſhall remain at Bender with a body of Spahis " and another of Janiſſaries, to defend it in your " abſence; and in following our Imperial orders " and intentions in all theſe points and articles, " you will render yourſelf worthy of the continu- " ance of our Imperial favour, as well as the praiſe " and recompence due to all thoſe, who obſerve " them."

Done at Our Imperial Reſidence of Conſtantinople, the 2d of the Moon Cheval, 1214 of the Hegira.

DURING the time they were waiting for this anſwer from the Grand Seignior; the King wrote to the Porte, complaining of the treachery of which he imagined the Kam of Tartary to be guilty; but all the paſſages were ſo well guarded, and beſides the Miniſter was againſt him, that his letters never reached the Sultan; nay, the Vizier ſtopped M. des Alleurs from coming to Adrianople, where the Porte then was, for fear that Miniſter, who was an Agent of the King of Sweden, ſhould endeavour to diſconcert the plan he had formed for obliging him to depart.

CHARLES, enraged at ſeeing himſelf thus hunted, as it were, from the Grand Seignior's dominions, determined not to quit them at all.

HE might have deſired to return through the territories of Germany, or to take ſhipping on the Black Sea, in order to ſail to Marſeilles by the Mediterranean; but he rather choſe to aſk nothing, and to wait the event.

WHEN the twelve hundred purſes were arrived, his treaſurer Grothuſen, who had learned the Turkiſh language during his long ſtay in the country, went to wait upon the Pacha without an interpreter, with the deſign of drawing the money from him, and then to form ſome new intrigue at the Porte, being continually held up by the fooliſh ſuppoſition, that the Swediſh party would at laſt be able to arm the Ottoman Empire againſt the Czar.

GROTHUSEN told the Pacha, that the King was not able to prepare his equipages without money. "But," ſaid the Pacha, "we ſhall ſettle all the ex-"pences of your departure; your maſter has no oc-"caſion to be at any expence while he continues "under the protection of mine."

GROTHUSEN replied, that there was ſo much difference between the equipages of the Turks and thoſe of the Franks, that they were obliged to have re-

courſe

courſe to the artificers of Sweden and Poland reſident at Varnitza.

He aſſured him that his maſter was diſpoſed to depart, and that this money would facilitate and haſten his departure. The Pacha, too credulous, gave the twelve hundred purſes; and attended the King a few days after, in a moſt reſpectful manner, to receive his orders for his departure.

His ſurprize was inconceivable, when the King told him he was not yet ready to go, and that he wanted a thouſand purſes more. The Pacha, confounded at this anſwer, was ſome time before he could ſpeak. He then retired to a window, where he was obſerved to ſhed ſome tears. At laſt, addreſſing himſelf to the King, "I ſhall loſe my head," ſays he, "for having "obliged your Majeſty: I have given you the twelve "hundred purſes againſt the expreſs orders of my "Sovereign." Having ſaid this he withdrew, oppreſſed with grief,

As he was going, the King ſtopped him, and ſaid, that he would excuſe him to the Sultan. "Ah!" replied the Turk, as he departed, "my maſter knows "not how to excuſe faults, he knows only to puniſh "them."

Ismael Pacha carried this piece of news to the Kam, who had received the ſame orders with the Pacha,

Pacha, not to ſuffer the twelve hundred purſes to be given to the King before his departure, and yet had conſented to the delivery of the money; he was as apprehenſive as the Pacha of the indignation of the Grand Seignior. They both wrote to the Porte to juſtify themſelves; proteſting that they had given the twelve hundred purſes upon the ſolemn promiſes of the King's Miniſter that he would depart without delay; and beſeeching his Highneſs not to impute the King's refuſal to their diſobedience.

CHARLES ſtill perſiſting in the idea that the Kam and Pacha wanted to deliver him up to his enemies, ordered M. Funk, at that time his Envoy at the Ottoman Court, to lay his complaints againſt them before the Sultan, and to aſk a thouſand purſes more. His own great generoſity, and the little account he made of money, hindered him from ſeeing the meanneſs of this propoſal. He did it merely to have a refuſal, and in order to have a freſh pretext for not departing. But it is to be reduced to ſtrange extremities to ſtand in need of ſuch artifices. Savari, his interpreter, an artful and enterprizing man, carried his letter to Adrianople, in ſpite of the ſtrictneſs which the Grand Vizier had uſed to guard the paſſes.

FUNK was obliged to make this dangerous demand. All the anſwer he received was to be thrown into priſon. The Sultan, enraged, convoked an Extraordinary Divan, and, what very ſeldom happens, ſpoke himſelf

himſelf on the occaſion. His ſpeech, according to the tranſlation then made of it, was as follows:

"I HAVE ſcarce known the King of Sweden but by "his defeat at Pultowa, and by the prayer he prefer- "red to me to grant him an aſylum in my dominions. "I have not, I believe, any need of him; nor any "reaſon either to love or fear him: notwithſtanding, "without conſulting any other motives than the hoſ- "pitality of a Muſſulman, and my own generoſity, "which ſheds the dew of its favours upon the great as "well as the ſmall; upon ſtrangers as well as my own "ſubjects; I have received and ſuccoured him with "all things, himſelf, his Miniſters, Officers, and ſol- "diers, and have not ceaſed for theſe three years and "a half to load him with preſents.

"I HAVE granted him a conſiderable guard to con- "duct him into his own kingdom. He aſked a "thouſand purſes to defray ſome expences, though I "pay them all. Inſtead of a thouſand I granted him "twelve hundred. After having got theſe out of "the hands of the Seraſkier of Bender, he aſks a "thouſand purſes more, and refuſes to depart, under "a pretence that the guard is too ſmall, whereas it "is but too large to paſs through the country of a "friend.

"I ASK then, whether it be to violate the laws "of hoſpitality to ſend back this Prince; and whe- "ther

" ther foreign Powers ought to accuſe me of vio-
" lence and injuſtice, in caſe I ſhould be obliged
" to compel him by force to depart."

ALL the Divan anſwered, that the Grand Seignior acted with juſtice. The Mufti declared that hoſpitality from Muſſulmen towards Infidels was not commanded, and much leſs towards the ungrateful; and he gave his Fetfa, a kind of mandate, which generally accompanies the important orders of the Grand Seignior. Theſe Fetfas are revered as oracles, though the very perſons by whom they are given are as much ſlaves to the Sultan as any others.

THE order and the Fetfa were carried to Bender by the Bouyouk Imraour, Grand Maſter of the Horſe, and a Chiaou-Pacha, firſt Uſher. The Pacha of Bender received the order at the houſe of the Kam of Tartary, from whence he immediately repaired to Varnitza, to aſk the King whether he would depart as a friend, or reduce him to the neceſſity of putting the orders of the Sultan in execution.

CHARLES, thus menaced, was not maſter of his paſſion. " Obey your maſter, if you dare," ſaid he, " and leave my preſence." The Pacha fired with indignation returned at full gallop, contrary to the uſual cuſtom of the Turks; and chancing to meet Fabricius in his way, he cried out to him, without checking

checking his horſe, "The King will not hear reaſon; "you will ſee ſtrange things preſently." The ſame day he diſcontinued the ſupply of the King's proviſions, and removed his guard of Janiſſaries. He cauſed intimation to be given to all the Poles and Coſſacks at Varnitza, that if they wiſhed to have any proviſions, they muſt quit the camp of the King of Sweden, and repair to Bender, and put themſelves under the protection of the Porte. They all obeyed and left the King without any other attendants than the officers of his houſhold, and three hundred Swediſh ſoldiers, to make head againſt twenty thouſand Tartars, and ſix thouſand Turks.

THERE was now no proviſion in the camp either for the men or their horſes. The King ordered twenty of the fine Arabian horſes, which had been ſent him by the Grand Seignior, to be ſhot without the camp, ſaying, "I will have none of their pro-"viſions nor their horſes." This was an excellent regale to the Tartars, who, as is well known, think horſe-fleſh delicious food. In the mean time the Turks and Tartars inveſted the King's little camp on every ſide.

THE King, without the leaſt diſcompoſure, made a regular intrenchment with his three hundred Swedes, in which work he himſelf aſſiſted; his Chancellor, his Treaſurer, his Secretaries, his valets-de-chambre, and all his domeſtics, giving likewiſe their aſſiſtance.

Some

Some barricadoed the windows, and others faſtened beams behind the doors in the form of buttreſſes.

As ſoon as the houſe was ſufficiently barricadoed, and the King had gone round his pretended fortifications, he ſat down to cheſs with his favourite Grothuſen, with as much tranquillity as if every thing was in the greateſt ſecurity. Happily M. Fabricius, the Envoy of Holſtein, did not lodge at Varnitza, but at a ſmall village between Varnitza and Bender, where Mr. Jeffreys, the Engliſh Envoy to the King of Sweden, likewiſe reſided. Theſe two Miniſters, ſeeing the ſtorm ready to burſt, took on themſelves the office of mediators between the Turks and the King. The Kam, and eſpecially the Pacha of Bender, who had no mind to offer violence to the Swediſh Monarch, received with eagerneſs the offers of theſe two Miniſters. They had two conferences at Bender, in which they were aſſiſted by the Uſher of the Seraglio, and the Grand Maſter of the Horſe, who had brought the Sultan's order and the Mufti's Fetfa.

M. FABRICIUS* declared to them, that his Swediſh Majeſty had many cogent reaſons to believe that they meant to deliver him up to his enemies in Poland. The Kam, the Pacha, and all the reſt, ſwore by their

* *The whole of this account is related by M. Fabricius in his Letters.*

heads, and called God to witneſs, that they deteſted ſo horrible a perfidy, and that they would ſhed the laſt drop of their blood rather than ſuffer the leaſt diſreſpect to be ſhewn to the King in Poland; adding, that they had in their hands the Ruſſian and Poliſh Ambaſſadors, who would anſwer with their lives for the leaſt affront that ſhould be offered to the King of Sweden. In fine, they complained bitterly that the King ſhould conceive ſuch injurious ſuſpicions againſt people, who had received him ſo politely, and treated him with ſo much humanity. Though oaths are frequently the language of perfidy, Fabricius ſuffered himſelf to be perſuaded by the Turks: he thought he could diſcern in their proteſtations that air of truth, which falſehood can, at beſt, but imitate imperfectly. He knew perfectly well there had been a ſecret correſpondence between the Kam of Tartary and King Auguſtus; but he was at laſt perſuaded, that the only end of their negociation was to oblige Charles XII. to quit the dominions of the Grand Seignior. Whether Fabricius deceived himſelf or not, he aſſured them he would repreſent to the King the injuſtice of his ſuſpicions. "But," adds he, "do you intend to compel him to depart:" "Yes," ſays the Pacha, "ſuch is the order of our "maſter." He then entreated them to conſider ſeriouſly whether that order implied that they ſhould ſhed the blood of a crowned head. "Yes," replies the Kam in a paſſion, "if that crowned

" head diſobeys the Grand Seignior in his own do-
" minions."

In the mean time, every thing being ready for the aſſault, the death of Charles XII. ſeemed inevitable; but the order of the Sultan not expreſsly ſaying whether they were to kill him in caſe of reſiſtance, the Pacha prevailed on the Kam to let him diſpatch an expreſs to Adrianople, where the Grand Seignior then reſided, to receive the laſt orders of his Highneſs.

M. Jeffreys and M. Fabricius, having procured this ſhort reſpite, haſtened to acquaint the King with it; they arrived with all the eagerneſs of people, who bring good news; but were received very coldly; he called them officious mediators, and ſtill perſiſted in his opinion that the order of the Sultan and the Fetfa of the Mufti were both forged, inaſmuch as they had ſent to the Porte for freſh orders.

The Engliſh Miniſter retired, firmly reſolved to interfere no more in the affairs of ſo inflexible a Prince. M. Fabricius, beloved by the King, and more accuſtomed to his humour than the Engliſh Miniſter, remained with him, to conjure him not to hazard ſo precious a life on ſuch an unneceſſary occaſion.

The

THE King for anſwer ſhewed him his fortifications, and begged he would employ his mediation only to procure him ſome proviſions. The Turks were eaſily prevailed upon to allow proviſions to be conveyed to the King's camp until the return of the courier from Adrianople. The Kam himſelf had ſtrictly enjoined his Tartars, who were eager for pillage, not to make any attempt againſt the Swedes till the arrival of freſh orders; ſo that Charles went ſometimes out of his camp with forty horſe, and rode through the midſt of the Tartars, who with great reſpect left him a free paſſage: he would even ride up in front of their lines, which they opened rather than reſiſt him.

AT laſt the order of the Grand Seignior being come to put to the ſword all the Swedes, who ſhould make the leaſt reſiſtance, and not even to ſpare the life of the King, the Pacha had the complaiſance to ſhew the order to M. Fabricius to the end that he might make his laſt effort to turn the obſtinacy of Charles. Fabricius went immediately to acquaint him with theſe ſad tidings. "Have you ſeen the order you ſpeak of?" ſaid the King. "Yes," replied Fabricius. "Well "then go tell them in my name, that this ſecond "order is another forgery, and that I will not de- "part." Fabricius threw himſelf at his feet, fell into a paſſion, and reproached him with his obſtinacy; but all to no purpoſe. "Return to your Turks," ſaid the King to him, ſmiling; "if they attack me. "I ſhall know how to defend myſelf."

THE

THE King's Chaplains likewiſe threw themſelves on their knees before him, conjuring him not to expoſe to certain death the unhappy remains of Pultowa, and eſpecially his own ſacred perſon; aſſuring him that reſiſtance in ſuch a caſe was altogether unjuſtifiable; and that it was a direct violation of all the laws of hoſpitality, to reſolve to continue againſt their will with ſtrangers, who had ſo long and ſo generouſly ſupported him. The King though he had not been angry with Fabricius, fell into a paſſion with his Prieſts, and told them, that he had taken them to pray for him, and not to give him advice.

THE Generals Hord and Dardoff, whoſe ſentiments had always been againſt hazarding a battle, which could not fail of proving unſucceſsful, ſhewed the King their breaſts covered with wounds, which they had received in his ſervice, and aſſured him that they were ready to lay down their lives for him; but begged that it might be, at leaſt, upon a more neceſſary occaſion. "I know, by your wounds and my "own," ſays Charles to them, "that we have fought "valiantly together. You have done your duty "hitherto; do it to-day likewiſe." Nothing now remained but to obey. Every one was aſhamed not to court death with their King. This Prince, being now prepared for the aſſault, flattered himſelf, in ſecret, that he ſhould have the honour of ſuſtaining with three hundred Swedes the efforts of a whole army. He aſſigned to every man his poſt: his Chancellor Mul-

lern

lern, and the Secretary Empreus and his Clerks, were to defend the Chancery-houſe; Baron Fief, at the head of the officers of the kitchen, was ſtationed at another poſt; the grooms of the ſtable and the cooks had another place to guard; for with him every one was a ſoldier: he then rode from the intrenchments to his houſe, promiſing rewards to every one, creating Officers, and aſſuring them that he would make Captains of the very meaneſt of his ſervants, who ſhould fight with courage.

It was not long before they beheld the army of the Turks and Tartars advancing to attack this little entrenchment with ten pieces of cannon and two mortars. The horſes tails waved in the air; the clarions ſounded; the cries of "Alla, Alla," were heard on every ſide. Baron Grothuſen remarked, that the Turks did not mix in their cries any injurious reflections againſt the King, but that they only called him "Demirbaſh," (head of iron.) He, therefore, inſtantly reſolved to go out of the camp alone and unarmed; and accordingly advanced to the lines of the Janiſſaries, moſt of whom had received money from him. "What, my friends, ſays he to them in their own language, "are yon come to maſſacre three hun-"dred Swedes, who are defenceleſs? You, brave "Janiſſaries, who have pardoned fifty thouſand Ruſ-"ſians upon their crying *amman* (pardon), have you "forgot the many favours you have received from us? "and would you aſſaſſinate this great King of Swe-"den,

" den, whom you love, and whoſe liberality you " have ſo often experienced? My friends, he deſires " but three days, and the orders of the Sultan are " not ſo ſtrict as you are taught to believe."

THESE words produced an effect, which Grothuſen himſelf could not have expected. The Janiſſaries ſwore by their beards that they would not attack the King, but would give him the three days he demanded. In vain the ſignal for aſſault was given; the Janiſſaries, ſo far from obeying, threatened to fall upon their commander, if the three days were not granted to the King of Sweden. They then went to the Pacha of Bender's tent, crying out that the Sultan's orders were forged.

TO this unexpected ſedition the Pacha had nothing to oppoſe but patience. He affected a ſatisfaction at the generous reſolution of the Janiſſaries, and ordered them to return to Bender. The Kam of Tartary, being an impetuous man, would have given the aſſault immediately with his own troops; but the Pacha, who was not willing that the Tartars ſhould have all the honour of taking the King, while he himſelf, perhaps, might be puniſhed for the diſobedience of the Janiſſaries, perſuaded the Kam to wait till the next day.

THE Pacha on his return to Bender aſſembled all the Officers of the Janiſſaries, and the oldeſt ſoldiers, to whom he read, and alſo ſhewed them, the poſitive order

order of the Sultan, together with the Mufti's Fetfa, Sixty of the oldeſt, with venerable white beards, who had received a thouſand preſents from the hands of the King of Sweden, propoſed to go to him in perſon, to intreat him to put himſelf into their hands, and to permit them to ſerve him as guards.

THE Pacha agreed to it, as there was no expedient he would not have adopted, rather than have been reduced to the neceſſity of killing this Prince. Theſe ſixty old veterans accordingly repaired the next morning to Varnitza, having nothing in their hands but long white rods, the only arms of the Janiſſaries when they are not at war; for the Turks regard as a barbarous cuſtom the Chriſtian manner of wearing ſwords in time of peace, and going armed into the houſes of their friends, and the churches.

THEY addreſſed themſelves to Baron Grothuſen and Chancellor Mullern: they told them that they came to ſerve as faithful guards to the King; and that, if he pleaſed, they would conduct him to Adrianople, where he might himſelf ſpeak to the Grand Seignior. At the time they were making this propoſal, the King was reading letters, which were brought from Conſtantinople, and which Fabricius, who could no longer attend him in perſon, had ſent him ſecretly by a Janiſſary. They were from Count Poniatowſky, who could neither ſerve him at Bender nor Adrianople, being detained at Conſtantinople by order of the Porte, from

from the time of his making the imprudent demand of the thouſand purſes. He informed the King, "that the "orders of the Sultan to ſeize or maſſacre his royal "perſon, in caſe of reſiſtance, were but too true: that "indeed the Sultan was deceived by his Miniſters; but "that the more he was impoſed upon, he would for "that very reaſon be the more, faithfully obeyed: that "he muſt ſubmit to the time, and yield to neceſſity: "that he took the liberty to adviſe him to try every "expedient with the Miniſters by way of negociation; "not to be inflexible in a matter, which required "the gentleſt management; and to expect from "time and good policy a remedy for that evil, which, "by violent meaſures, would be only rendered in-"curable."

But neither the propoſals of the old Janiſſaries, nor the letters of Poniatowſky, could give the King even an idea that he could yield without incurring diſhonour. He choſe rather to periſh by the hands of the Turks, than to be in any reſpect their priſoner; he therefore diſmiſſed the Janiſſaries without deigning to ſee them, and ſent them word, that if they did not immediately depart, he would cut off their beards; which, in the Eaſtern countries, is eſteemed the moſt outrageous of all affronts.

The old men, filled with the moſt lively indignation, returned home, crying out as they went, "Ah "this head of iron! ſince he will periſh, let him "periſh."

"periſh." They went and gave the Pacha an account of their commiſſion, and informed their comrades at Bender of the ſtrange reception they had met with. Every one then ſwore to obey the Pacha's orders without delay, and were as impatient to begin the aſſault as they had been backward the day before.

THE word of command was immediately given; the Turks marched up to the intrenchments; the Tartars were already waiting for them, and the cannon began to play. The Janiſſaries on the one ſide, and the Tartars on the other; in an inſtant forced the little camp: hardly twenty Swedes drew their ſwords: the whole three hundred were ſurrounded and made priſoners without reſiſtance. The King was then on horſeback, between his houſe and his camp, with the Generals Hord, Dardoff, and Sparre; and ſeeing that all his ſoldiers were taken priſoners before his eyes, he ſaid with great compoſure to theſe three Officers, "Come, let us go "and defend the houſe. We will fight," adds he with a ſmile, "*pro aris & focis.*"

ACCORDINGLY he galloped with them up to the houſe, in which he had placed about forty domeſtics as centinels, and which he had fortified in the beſt manner he was able.

THESE Generals, accuſtomed as they were to the dauntleſs intrepidity of their maſter, were ſurpriſed to ſee him reſolve in cold blood, and even with an air of pleaſantry, to defend himſelf againſt ten pieces of cannon and a whole army: they followed him with ſome guards and domeſtics, making in all about twenty perſons.

WHEN they came to the door, they found it beſieged by the Janiſſaries; two hundred Turks and Tartars had already entered by a window, and had made themſelves maſters of all the apartments, except a large hall, into which the King's domeſtics had retired. This hall was happily near the door at which the King deſigned to enter with his little troop of twenty perſons; he threw himſelf off his horſe with piſtol and ſword in hand, and his followers did the ſame.

THE Janiſſaries fell upon him on all ſides: they were animated by the promiſe, which the Pacha had made, of eight ducats of gold to every one who ſhould only touch his clothes, in caſe they could take him. He wounded and killed whoever approached his perſon. A Janiſſary, whom he had wounded, clapped his carbine to his face, and had not his arm been puſhed aſide by the motion of the crowd, which moved backwards and forwards like a wave, the king had certainly been killed. The ball grazed upon his noſe, and

and carried away with it the tip of his ear, and then broke the arm of General Hord, whoſe deſtiny it was to be always wounded by the ſide of his maſter.

THE King plunged his ſword in the Janiſſary's breaſt; at the ſame time his domeſtics, who were ſhut up in the great hall, opened the door: the King entered like an arrow, followed by his little troop; they inſtantly ſhut the door, and barricadoed it with whatever they could find. In this manner was Charles XII. ſhut up in a hall with all his attendants, conſiſting of about ſixty men, officers, guards, ſecretaries, valets-de-chambre, and domeſtics of every kind.

THE Janiſſaries and Tartars pillaged the reſt of the houſe, and filled the apartments. "Come," ſays the King, "let us go and drive theſe barbarians out of "my houſe;" and putting himſelf at the head of his men, he with his own hands opened the door of the hall that led to his bed-chamber, rushed into the room, and fired upon thoſe who were plundering.

THE Turks, loaded with ſpoil, and terrified at the ſudden appearance of the King, whom they had been accuſtomed to reſpect, threw down their arms, leaped out of the window, or retired to the cellars: the King taking advantage of their confuſion, and his own men being animated with ſucceſs, they purſued the

the Turks from chamber to chamber, killing or wounding thoſe, who had not made their eſcape; and in a quarter of an hour cleared the houſe of their enemies.

In the heat of the fight the King perceived two Janiſſaries, who had hid themſelves under his bed: one of them he killed with his ſword; the other aſked for mercy, by crying "Amman." "I give thee "thy life," ſaid the King to him, "on condition that "you go and give to the Pacha a faithful account of "what you have ſeen." The Turk readily promiſed to do this, and was allowed to leap out at the window like the reſt.

The Swedes being at laſt maſters of the houſe, again ſhut and barricadoed the windows. They were not in want of arms, a ground room full of muſquets and powder having eſcaped the tumultuary ſearch of the Janiſſaries. Theſe they employed to good ſervice; they fired through the windows almoſt cloſe upon the Turks, of whom, in leſs than half a quarter of an hour, they killed two hundred.

The cannon ſtill played upon the houſe; yet, the ſtones were very ſoft, they only made ſome holes but demoliſhed nothing.

The Kam of Tartary and the Pacha, who were deſirous of taking the King alive, and being aſhamed

to loſe ſo many men, and to employ a whole army againſt ſixty perſons, thought it adviſeable to ſet fire to the houſe, in order to oblige the King to ſurrender. They cauſed ſome arrows, twiſted about with lighted matches, to be ſhot upon the roof, and againſt the doors and windows, and the houſe was in flames in a moment. The roof, all on fire, was ready to tumble upon the Swedes. The King with great calmneſs gave orders to extinguiſh the fire: finding a little barrel of liquor, he took it up himſelf, and, aſſiſted by two Swedes, threw it upon the place where the fire was moſt violent. It happened that the barrel was filled with brandy; but the hurry inſeparable from ſuch a ſcene of confuſion, hindered them from thinking of it in time. The fire now raged with double fury; the King's apartment was entirely conſumed; the great hall where the Swedes were, was filled with a terrible ſmoke, mixed with ſheets of flame, which entered in at the doors of the neighbouring apartments; one half of the roof had ſunk within the houſe, and the other had fallen on the outſide, cracking amidſt the flames.

In this extremity, a guard called Walberg ventured to cry out that it was neceſſary to ſurrender. "There "is a ſtrange man," ſaid the King, "to imagine that "it is not more glorious to be burnt than taken pri- "ſoner!" Another centinel, named Roſen, had the preſence of mind to obſerve, that the Chancery-houſe, which was but fifty paces diſtant, had a ſtone roof,

roof, and was proof againſt fire; that they ought to ſally forth, take poſſeſſion of that houſe, and then defend themſelves. "There is a true Swede for you," cried the King, embracing the centinel, and made him a Colonel upon the ſpot: "Come on, my "friends," ſaid he, "take as much powder and ball "with you as you can, and let us take poſſeſſion of "the Chancery ſword in hand."

THE Turks, who all the while ſurrounded the houſe, ſaw with admiration, mixed with terror, the Swedes continue in the houſe all in flames; but their aſtoniſhment was ſtill greater when they ſaw the door open, and the King and his followers ruſhing out upon them like ſo many madmen. Charles and his principal Officers were armed with ſwords and piſtols; every man fired two piſtols at once, as ſoon as the doors were opened; and, in the twinkling of an eye, throwing away their piſtols and drawing their ſwords, they made the Turks recoil above fifty paces. But in a moment after this little troop was ſurrounded: the King, who was booted, according to his uſual cuſtom, entangled himſelf with his ſpurs, and fell one-and-twenty Janiſſaries at once ſprang upon him he immediately threw up his ſword into the air, to ſave himſelf the mortification of ſurrendering it; the Turks carried him to the quarters of the Pacha, ſome taking hold of his legs, and others of his arms, in the ſame manner as ſick perſons are carried to prevent their being hurt.

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THE moment the King found himſelf taken priſoner, the violence of his temper, and the fury, which ſuch a long and deſperate fight muſt have naturally inſpired, gave place at once to a mild and gentle behaviour. He dropped not a word of impatience, nor was an angry look to be ſeen in his face. He regarded the Janiſſaries with a ſmiling countenance; and they carried him off crying "Alla," with an indignation mixed at the ſame time with reſpect. His Officers were taken at the ſame time, and ſtripped by the Turks and Tartars. It was on the 12th of February 1713 that this ſtrange event happened, which was followed with very ſingular conſequences*.

* *M. NORBERG, who was not preſent at this event, hath in this particular part of his hiſtory only copied the account from M. de Voltaire; but he has ſuppreſsed ſeveral intereſting circumſtances, and has not been able to juſtify the temerity of Charles XII. All that he has been able to ſay againſt M. de Voltaire with regard to the affair of Bender, is reducible to the adventure of the Sieur Fredericus, valet-de-chambre to the King of Sweden, who ſome pretend was burnt in the King's houſe, and who according to others was cut in two by the Tartars. La Mottraye alledges likewiſe that the King of Sweden did not uſe the words "we will fight* pro aris & focis:" *but M. Fabricius, who was preſent, affirms that the King did pronounce theſe words, that La Mottraye was not near enough to hear them, and that if he had he was not capable of comprehending their meaning, as he did not underſtand a word of Latin.*

BOOK

BOOK VII.

ARGUMENT.

The Turks convey Charles to Demirtaſh.—King Staniſlaus taken thither at the ſame time.—The bold Action of M. de Villelongue.—Revolutions in the Seraglio.—Battle in Pomerania.—Altena burnt by the Swedes.—Charles ſets out on his Return to his own Dominions.—His ſtrange Manner of Travelling.—His Arrival at Stralſund.—His Misfortunes.—Succeſſes of Peter the Great.—His Triumphant Entry into Peterſburgh.

THE Pacha of Bender waited in his tent with great ſolemnity the arrival of Charles, attended by one Marco, an interpreter. He received that Prince with the moſt profound reſpect, and entreated him to repoſe himſelf on a ſopha; but the King, not regarding the Turk's civilities, continued ſtanding.

"BLESSED be the Almighty," ſaid the Pacha, "that your Majeſty is alive: my deſpair is bitter "at having been obliged by your Majeſty to execute "the orders of his Highneſs." The King, only vexed that his three hundred ſoldiers ſuffered themſelves to be taken in their intrenchments, replied, "Ah!

"Ah! had my ſoldiers defended themſelves as they "ought, you would not have forced our camp in "ten days." "Alas," cried the Turk, "that ſo "much courage ſhould be ſo ill employed!" He ordered the King to be conducted back to Bender on a horſe richly capariſoned. His Swedes were all either killed or taken priſoners; Charles's equipage, furniture, papers, and moſt neceſſary utenſils, were either plundered or burnt; and Swediſh Officers were to be ſeen on the public roads, almoſt naked and chained two and two, following on foot the Tartars or Janiſſaries. The chancellor and the General Officers had no other deſtiny; they were made the ſlaves of the ſoldiers to whoſe ſhare they had fallen.

ISMAEL PACHA having conducted Charles to his Seraglio at Bender, gave up to him his own apartment, and ordered him to be ſerved like a King, but not without taking the precaution to place Janiſſaries as centinels at the chamber door. A bed was alſo prepared for him; but he threw himſelf down upon a ſopha, booted as he was, and fell faſt aſleep. An Officer that ſtood near him in waiting covered his head with his cap; but the King upon awaking from his firſt ſleep threw it off: and the Turk beheld with aſtoniſhment a Sovereign ſleeping in his boots and bareheaded. The next morning Iſmael introduced Fabricius into the King's chamber. Fabricius found his Majeſty with his clothes torn, his boots, his hands, and his whole body covered with blood and powder, and his eye-

brows burnt, yet maintaining a ſerene countenance even in this condition. He threw himſelf upon his knees before him, without being able to utter a word, but ſoon recovering from his ſurpriſe by the free and eaſy manner in which the King addreſſed him, he reſumed his uſual familiarity, and they began to talk of the battle of Bender with much pleaſantry. "They "ſay," ſaid Fabricius, "that your Majeſty killed twen- "ty Janiſſaries with your own hand." "Well, well," replied the King, "a ſtory always gains one half by "report." In the midſt of this converſation the Pacha preſented to the King his favourite Grothuſen and Colonel Ribbins, whom he had had the generoſity to redeem at his own expence. Fabricius undertook to ranſom the other priſoners.

JEFFREYS, the Envoy of England, joined with him to procure the money to defray the expence. A Frenchman, who had come to Bender out of curioſity, and who hath written a ſhort account of theſe tranſactions, gave all that he had. Theſe ſtrangers, aſſiſted by the intereſt and even by the money of the Pacha, redeemed not only the Officers, but alſo their clothes, from the hands of the Turks and Tartars.

NEXT day the King was conducted, as a priſoner, in a chariot covered with ſcarlet, towards Adrianople: his Treaſurer Grothuſen was with him: Chancellor Mullern and ſeveral Officers followed in another carriage

carriage: ſeveral were on horſeback; and when they caſt their eyes on the chariot, in which the King was, they could not refrain from tears. The Pacha was at the head of the eſcort. Fabricius repreſented it to him, that it was ſhameful the King ſhould want a ſword, and begged he would give him one. "God "forbid!" ſaid the Pacha, "he would cut our beards "for us if he had one." However, in a few hours after he gave him one.

As they were thus conducting this King diſarmed and a priſoner, who but a few years before had given law to ſo many ſtates, and had ſeen himſelf the arbiter of the North and the terror of Europe, there appeared in the ſame place another example of the frailty of human grandeur. King Staniſlaus had been ſeized in the Turkiſh dominions, and they were now carrying him to Bender, at the very time that they were carrying Charles from it.

STANISLAUS being no longer ſupported by the hand which had made him King, and finding himſelf without money, and conſequently without intereſt in Poland, had retired at firſt into Pomerania; and not being able to preſerve his own kingdom, he had done every thing, as far as was in his power, to defend the dominions of his benefactor. He had even gone to Sweden, in order to haſten the reinforcements that were ſo much wanting in Livonia and Pomerania; in ſhort,

ſhort, he had done every thing that could be expected from the friend of Charles XII. At this time the firſt King of Pruſſia, a very prudent Prince, being juſtly apprehenſive of the too near neighbourhood of the Muſcovites, thought of entering into a league with Auguſtus and the republic of Poland, in order to ſend back the Ruſſians to their own country, and of engaging Charles XII. himſelf in this project. Three great events were to be produced by this plan; the peace of the North, the return of Charles to his own dominions, and the eſtabliſhment of a ſtrong barrier againſt the Ruſſians, already become formidable to Europe. The preliminary article of this treaty, upon which the public tranquillity depended, was the abdication of Staniſlaus; who not only accepted the propoſal, but even charged himſelf with being the negociator of a peace, which deprived him of his crown. Neceſſity, the public welfare, the glory of the ſacrifice, and the intereſt of Charles, to whom he owed every thing, and whom he loved, decided him. He wrote to Bender; explained to the King of Sweden the ſituation of his affairs, their misfortunes, and their remedy; and conjured him not to oppoſe an abdication become neceſſary from the courſe of events, and honourable from its motives: he alſo entreated him not to ſacrifice the intereſts of Sweden to thoſe of an unhappy friend, who ſacrificed himſelf, without repining, to the public good. Charles received theſe letters at Varnitza, and ſaid to the courier in a paſſion, in preſence of ſeveral witneſſes,

"If

"If my friend will not be a King, I ſhall be able to "make one of another perſon."

STANISLAUS was obſtinately bent on the ſacrifice, which Charles oppoſed. The times ſeem as if they were deſtined by Providence to produce ſtrange ſentiments, and ſtill more extraordinary actions, Staniſlaus reſolved to go himſelf and prevail on Charles, though he ran a greater riſk in abdicating the throne, than ever he had done in obtaining it. One evening, about ſix o'clock, he ſtole from the Swediſh army, which he commanded in Pomerania, and ſet out, accompanied by Baron Sparr, who hath ſince been an Ambaſſador in England and France, and another Colonel. He aſſumed the name of a Frenchman, called Haran, then a Major in the Swediſh army, and who lately died Commander of Dantzic. He paſſed cloſe by the whole army of the enemy; was ſometimes ſtopped, and as often releaſed by virtue of a paſſport, which he had in the name of Haran; and at laſt, after many perils and dangers, arrived on the frontiers of Turkey.

WHEN he had reached Moldavia, he ſent back Baron Sparr to his army, and entered Yaſſy, the capital of Moldavia, thinking himſelf ſafe in a country where the King of Sweden had been treated ſo reſpectfully: he was far from ſuſpecting what was then paſſing.

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He was aſked who he was; to which he anſwered, that he was a Major of a regiment in the ſervice of Charles XII. At the very mention of the name he was ſeized, and carried before the Hoſpodar of Moldavia, who, having already learned from the Gazettes that Staniſlaus had privately withdrawn from his army, conceived ſome ſuſpicions of the truth. The King's countenance had been deſcribed to him, which was very eaſily diſtinguiſhed by its fulneſs as well as its agreeableneſs, and an air of ſweetneſs, which he poſſeſſed in an uncommon degree.

The Hoſpodar interrogated him, put to him a great many captious queſtions, and at laſt aſked him what commiſſion he held in the Swediſh army. Staniſlaus and the Hoſpodar carried on their converſation in Latin. "*Major ſum*," ſaid Staniſlaus. *Imo Maximus es*," replied the Moldavian; and immediately preſented him with a chair of ſtate. He treated him as a King, but yet like a King, who was a priſoner, and he placed a ſtrict guard about a Greek convent, in which he was obliged to remain till they received the Sultan's orders. The orders were to conduct him to Bender, from which place Charles XII. had been juſt removed.

The news of this event was brought to the Pacha at the time he was accompanying the King of Sweden's carriage. The Pacha immediately acquainted Fabricius with it, who, approaching Charles's chariot, told him he was not the only King that was a priſoner

priſoner in the hands of the Turks, for that Staniſlaus was but a few miles off, under a guard of ſoldiers. "Run to him, my dear Fabricius," ſaid Charles, without being diſconcerted at the accident; "tell "him never to make peace with Auguſtus, and "aſſure him that in a little time our affairs will "change." So inflexible was Charles in his own opinions, that abandoned, as he was in Poland, attacked in his own dominions, a captive in a Turkiſh litter, and led a priſoner without knowing whither they were carrying him, he ſtill counted on fortune, and ſtill expected to have an hundred thouſand men from the Ottoman Porte. Fabricius haſtened to execute his commiſſion, attended by a Janiſſary, having obtained permiſſion from the Pacha. At a few miles diſtance he met the body of Soldiers that conducted Staniſlaus: he addreſſed himſelf to a Cavalier that rode in the midſt of them, clad in a French Dreſs, and but indifferently mounted, and aſked him in the German tongue where the King of Poland was. The perſon to whom he ſpoke was Staniſlaus himſelf, whom he did not recollect under this diſguiſe. "What!" ſaid the King, "do you no longer remember me?" Fabricius then repreſented to him the wretched ſtate in which the King of Sweden was, and his unalterable but uſeleſs obſtinacy in his deſigns.

As Staniſlaus approached Bender, the Pacha, who was upon his return, after having accompanied Charles

ſeveral miles, ſent the King of Poland an Arabian horſe, with a magnificent harneſs.

He was received at Bender amidſt a diſcharge of the artillery; and excepting his liberty, of which he was at firſt deprived, he had no cauſe to complain of the treatment he met with*. In the mean time Charles was conducted to Adrianople. That town was already filled with the account of his late battle. The Turks condemned and admired him at the ſame time; but the Divan, exaſperated, already threatened to confine him in one of the Iſlands of the Archipelago.

Stanislaus, King of Poland, who did me the honour to inform me of the greateſt part of theſe particulars, aſſured me alſo, that it was propoſed in the Divan to confine him likewiſe in one of the Iſlands of Greece; but a few months after, the Grand Seignior, being mollified, permitted him to depart.

M. des Alleurs, who could have taken his part, and could have prevented them from offering ſuch an affront to every Chriſtian King, was at Conſtantinople;

* *The good Chaplain Norberg alledges that this is a contradiction, ſaying, that King Staniſlaus was at once detained a priſoner, and treated as a King at Bender. How! had not this poor man diſcernment enough to perceive, that it is poſſible for a man to be a priſoner, and yet loaded with honours at the ſame time?*

nople; as was alſo M. Poniatowſky, whoſe fertile and enterpriſing genius they had ever dreaded. The greateſt part of the Swedes at Adrianople were in priſon; and the Sultan's throne ſeemed to be inacceſſible on all ſides to the complaints of the King of Sweden.

THE Marquis de Fierville, who had reſided with Charles at Bender as a private agent of France, was at that time at Adrianople. He dared to form the deſign of rendering that Prince a ſervice, at a time when he was abandoned or oppreſſed by every one. He was happily ſeconded in this deſign by a French gentleman, of an ancient houſe in Champagne, called Villelongue, a man of intrepidity, who not having at that time a fortune equal to his courage, and beſides dazzled with the reputation of the King of Sweden, had come to Turkey with a view of entering into the ſervice of that Prince.

M. DE FIERVILLE, with the aſſiſtance of this young man, wrote a memorial in the name of the King of Sweden, in which he made that monarch demand ſatisfaction of the Sultan for the inſult offered in his perſon to all crowned heads, and for the treachery, real or ſuppoſed, of the Kam and the Pacha of Bender.

IN this memorial he accuſed the Vizier and other Miniſters of having been corrupted by the Ruſſians,

of impoſing upon the Grand Seignior, of having intercepted the King's letters to his Highneſs, and of having by their artifices extorted from the Sultan an order ſo contrary to the hoſpitality of Muſſulmen, by which the law of nations was violated, and in a manner ſo unworthy of a great Emperor, attacking with twenty thouſand men a King, who had none but his own domeſtics to defend him, and who relied upon the ſacred word of the Sultan.

When this memorial was drawn up, it was neceſſary to have it tranſlated into the Turkiſh language, and written in a particular hand, upon a paper made on purpoſe, which it is neceſſary to make uſe of for every thing which is preſented to the Sultan.

They applied to ſeveral French Interpreters in the town; but the affairs of the King of Sweden were ſo deſperate, and the Vizier declared ſo openly againſt him, that not a ſingle Interpreter dared even to tranſlate it. At laſt they found a ſtranger, whoſe hand was not known at the Porte, who, having received a handſome recompence, and the aſſurance of profound ſecrecy, tranſlated the memorial into the Turkiſh language, and wrote it upon the proper ſort of paper. Baron d'Advirſon, a Swediſh Officer, counterfeited the King's ſignature. Fierville, who had the royal ſignet, ſet it to the writing; and they ſealed the whole with the arms of Sweden. Villelongue charged himſelf with the delivery of this packet into the hands of the Grand Seignior as he went to the Moſque, according

cording to his uſual cuſtom. The like methods had been frequently employed to preſent memorials to the Sultan againſt his Miniſters; but that very circumſtance rendered the ſucceſs of this enterprize the more difficult, and the danger ſtill greater.

THE Vizier, who foreſaw that the Swedes would demand juſtice of the Sultan, and being inſtructed by the unhappy fate of his predeceſſors, had given peremptory orders to allow no one to approach the Grand Seignior's perſon, but to ſeize every one who ſhould be about the Moſque with petitions in their hands.

VILLELONGUE knew of this order, and was not ignorant that he run the riſk of loſing his head. He laid aſide his Frank's dreſs, and put on a Grecian habit; and, concealing the letter in his boſom, repaired betimes to the neighbourhood of the Moſque, to which the Grand Seignior reſorted. He counterfeited the madman, and dancing between two files of Janiſſaries through which the Sultan was to paſs, he purpoſely let drop ſome pieces of money from his pockets, as if by chance, in order to amuſe the guards.

WHEN the Sultan approached, the guards endeavoured to remove Villelongue; but he fell on his knees and ſtruggled with the Janiſſaries: at laſt his cap fell off, and he was diſcovered by his long hair to be a Frank:

a Frank: he received ſeveral blows, and was very roughly handled. The Grand Seignior, who was near, heard the ſcuffle, and demanded the cauſe of it. Villelongue cried out with all his force, "*Amman!* "*Amman!* Mercy! pulling the letter out of his boſom. The Sultan ordered the guards to let him approach. Villelongue inſtantly ran to him, embraced his ſtirrup, and preſented the memorial, ſaying, "*Sweid* "*crall dan*; It is the King of Sweden who gives you "this." The Sultan put the letter in his boſom, and proceeded to the Moſque. In the mean while they ſecured Villelongue, and impriſoned him in one of the exterior apartments of the Seraglio.

THE Sultan having read the letter, upon his leaving the Moſque reſolved to interrogate the priſoner himſelf. What I relate here will perhaps appear ſomewhat incredible; but yet nothing is here advanced but what is vouched by the letters of M. de Villelongue; and when ſo brave an Officer aſſerts any thing upon honour, he merits ſome credit. He aſſured me, then, that the Sultan laid aſide his Imperial garb, and the particular Turban which he wears, and diſguiſed himſelf like an Officer of the Janiſſaries, a thing which he frequently does. He brought along with him an old man of the Iſland of Malta, who ſerved as an interpreter. By favour of this diſguiſe Villelongue enjoyed an honour which no Chriſtian Ambaſſador had ever obtained: he had a private conference with the Turkiſh Emperor for a quarter of

an

an hour. He did not fail to repreſent the wrongs which the King of Sweden had ſuffered, to accuſe the Miniſters, and to demand ſatisfaction, with ſo much the more freedom, as in talking to the Sultan he was only ſuppoſed to be talking to his equal. He could eaſily diſcover, notwithſtanding the darkneſs of the priſon, that it was no other than the Grand Seignior himſelf: but this only ſerved to give him the more ſpirit in the converſation. The pretended Officer of the Janiſſaries ſaid to Villelongue, "Chriſtian, aſſure "thyſelf that the Sultan my maſter has the ſoul of "an Emperor; and that if your King of Sweden "has reaſon on his ſide, he will do him juſtice." Villelongue was ſoon after ſet at liberty; and in a few weeks after a ſudden change was ſeen in the Seraglio, which the Swedes attributed to this ſingular conference. The Mufti was depoſed; the Kam of Tartary was baniſhed to Rhodes; and the Seraſkier Pacha of Bender confined in one of the Iſlands of the Archipelago.

THE Ottoman Porte is ſo ſubject to the like revolutions, that it is difficult to decide whether the Sultan really meant by theſe ſacrifices to appeaſe the King of Sweden or not. Indeed, from the treatment, which that Prince received, it does not appear that the Porte had any great inclination to oblige him.

THE favourite Ali-Coumourgi was ſuſpected of being the ſole cauſe of all theſe changes, in order to

ſerve

ſerve his own particular views. It was ſaid that he cauſed the Kam of Tartary and the Seraſkier of Bender to be baniſhed, under the pretence that they had given the King the twelve hundred purſes in contradiction to the orders of the Grand Seignior. He likewiſe raiſed to the throne of Tartary the brother of the depoſed Kam, a younger man of his own age, who had little regard for his brother, and upon whom the favourite depended greatly in proſecuting the wars he had meditated. With regard to the Grand Vizier Juſſuf, he was not depoſed till ſome weeks after, when Soliman Pacha obtained the title of Firſt Vizier.

It is incumbent on me to declare, that M. de Villelongue and ſeveral Swedes aſſured me, that the letter preſented to the Sultan in the King's name, was the cauſe of all theſe great changes at the Porte; but M. de Fierville, for his part, has aſſured me of the contrary. But indeed I have found the like contradictions in many memorials that have been ſubmitted to my peruſal. In ſuch caſes, it is the duty of an Hiſtorian to give matters of fact ingenuouſly, without endeavouring to dive into motives; and to confine himſelf to the relation of what he does know, without gueſſing at things which he is not acquainted with.

In the mean time they had conducted Charles XII. to the little caſtle of Demirtaſh, near Adrianople. An innumerable

innumerable number of Turks were aſſembled in this place to ſee the arrival of that Prince, whom they carried from his chariot to the caſtle on a ſopha; but Charles, that he might not be ſeen by the crowd, put a cuſhion upon his head.

THE Porte was ſeveral days before it would grant him his requeſt to reſide at Demotica, a little town ſix leagues from Adrianople, and near the famous river Hebrus, now called Marizza. "Go," ſaid Coumourgi to the Grand Vizier Soliman, "and "tell the King of Sweden that he may ſtay at De- "motica all his life; I will be anſwerable that before "the expiration of one year, he will demand, of his "own accord to be gone; but let your chief care be "not to furniſh him with money."

THUS was the King conveyed to the little town of Demotica, where the Porte allowed him a "thaim," conſiſting of a conſiderable quantity of proviſions for himſelf and his retinue: but they would only grant him five-and-twenty crowns a-day in money to buy pork and wine, two kinds of proviſions which the Turks never furniſh to others. The purſe of five hundred crowns a-day, which he had at Bender, was withdrawn.

SCARCELY had he arrived at Demotica with his little court, when the Grand Vizier, Soliman, was depoſed, and his place filled by Ibrahim Molla, a man of a high

a high ſpirit, of great courage, but of the coarſeſt manners. It is not uſeleſs to make known his hiſtory, that the reader may be acquainted with the characters of all thoſe Viceroys of the Ottoman empire, upon whom the fortune of Charles ſo long depended.

He had been a common ſailor till the acceſſion of the Sultan Achmet III. This Emperor frequently diſguiſed himſelf either in the habit of a private man, of a prieſt, or a derviſe; and uſed to ſlip in the evening into the coffee-houſes of Conſtantinople, and the public places, to hear what was ſaid of him, and to collect the ſentiments of the people. One day he overheard this Molla complaining that the Turkiſh ſhips never took any prizes, and ſwearing, that if he were a Captain of a ſhip, he would never enter the port of Conſtantinople without bringing ſome veſſel of the Infidels along with him. The Grand Seignior the next day ordered the command of a ſhip to be given to him, and that he ſhould be ſent upon a cruize. The new captain returned in a few days after with a Malteſe bark, and a galley of Genoa. In about two years time he was appointed Captain General of the navy, and at laſt Grand Vizier. As ſoon as he arrived at this poſt, he thought he could diſpenſe with the favourite; and to render himſelf the more neceſſary, he projected a ſcheme for commencing a war againſt the Ruſſians: with this view, he pitched a tent

tent not far from the place where the King of Sweden reſided.

He invited that Prince to come and ſee him, with the new Kam of Tartary and the French Ambaſſador. The King, who became more proud as he became more unfortunate, conſidered it as a moſt daring affront for a ſubject to ſend him an invitation; he therefore ordered his Chancellor Mullern to go in his place; and he himſelf, who was always in the extremes, leſt the Turks ſhould not pay him that reſpect which was due to his royal perſon, or oblige him to compromiſe his dignity, took to his bed, and reſolved not to quit it as long as he ſhould ſtay at Demotica. He remained ten months in his bed pretending to be ill. Chancellor Mullern, Grothuſen, and Colonel Dubens, were the only perſons, who were admitted to his table. They had none of the conveniences, with which the Franks are generally provided; all theſe they had loſt at Bender; conſequently their meals were far from being ſerved with pomp or with elegance. They waited on themſelves; and, during the whole time, Chancellor Mullern performed the office of cook.

During the time that Charles was thus paſſing his time in bed, he was apprized of the deſolation of all his provinces that were ſituated without the limits of Sweden.

GENERAL STEINBOCK, rendered illuſtrious by his driving the Danes out of Scania, and having conquered their choiceſt troops with a handful of peaſants, ſtill maintained for ſome time the reputation of the Swediſh arms. He defended, as far as he was able, Pomerania, Bremen, and what the King ſtill poſſeſſed in Germany; but could not hinder the combined armies of the Danes and Saxons from beſieging Stade, a town of great ſtrength and importance, ſituated on the banks of the Elbe in the Duchy of Bremen. The town was bombarded and reduced to aſhes, and the garriſon obliged to ſurrender at diſcretion, before Steinbock was able to advance to their aſſiſtance.

THIS General, who had about twelve thouſand men, of which one half were cavalry, purſued the enemy, who were twice as numerous; and at laſt overtook them in the Duchy of Mecklenburg, at a place called Gadebuſh, near a river which bears the ſame name. He arrived oppoſite to the Saxons and the Danes on the 20th of December 1712. He was ſeparated from them by a moraſs. The enemy had this moraſs in front, and a wood in their rear; they had alſo the advantage of number and ſituation; and their camp could not be gained without croſſing the marſh under the fire of their artillery.

STEINBOCK paſſed at the head of his troops, arrived in order of battle, and began one of the moſt obſtinate and bloody engagements which ever happened

pened between theſe rival nations. After a ſharp conflict for three hours, the Danes and Saxons were routed, and obliged to quit the field of battle.

It was in this battle, that a ſon of Auguſtus by the Counteſs of Konigſmark, known by the name of Count Saxe, ſerved his apprenticeſhip in the art of war. This is the ſame Count Saxe, who had the honour afterwards to be elected Duke of Courland, and, who wanted nothing but power to put himſelf in poſſeſſion of the moſt inconteſtible right, which any man can have to ſovereignty, I mean the unanimous vote of the people. This is alſo the man, who has ſince acquired a more ſolid glory by ſaving France at the battle of Fontenoy, by conquering Flanders, and meriting the reputation of the greateſt General of our age. He commanded a regiment at Gadebuſh, and had a horſe killed under him: I have heard him ſay, that the Swedes always kept their ranks; and that, even after the victory was decided, and the firſt lines of theſe brave troops had their enemies lying dead at their feet, there was not a ſingle Swediſh ſoldier, who dared even ſtoop to ſtrip them, before prayers were read in the field of battle; ſo ſteady were they in the ſtrict diſcipline to which their King had always accuſtomed them,

Steinbock, after this victory, remembering that the Danes had reduced Stade to aſhes, went to retaliate on Altena, which belongs to the King of Denmark.

mark. Altena ſtands below Hamburgh, on the banks of the Elbe, which can convey ſhips of conſiderable burthen into its harbour. The King of Denmark had favoured this town with many privileges, with the deſign of eſtabliſhing a flouriſhing commerce: the induſtry of its inhabitants, encouraged by the prudent meaſures of the King, had already added Altena to the number of rich and commercial cities. Hamburgh had conceived a jealouſy at this, and wiſhed for nothing ſo much as its deſtruction. As ſoon as Steinbock was in ſight of Altena, he ſent a trumpet to acquaint the inhabitants, that they muſt retire with as many of their effects as they could carry off, and that he was going to raze their town to its foundation.

The Magiſtrates came and threw themſelves at his feet, and offered him an hundred thouſand crowns for ranſom. Steinbock demanded two hundred thouſand. The inhabitants begged that they might at leaſt be permitted to ſend to Hamburgh, where their correſpondents reſided, aſſuring him that next day they would ſend him that ſum; but the Swediſh General replied, that they muſt give it inſtantly, or he would immediately ſet Altena in flames.

His troops were already in the ſuburbs with torches in their hands. A feeble wooden gate, and a ditch already filled up, were the only defences of the inhabitants,

inhabitants of Altena. Theſe unfortunate people were obliged to quit their houſes with precipitation in the middle of the night. It was the ninth of January 1713. The rigour of the ſeaſon, then exceſſive, was augmented by a violent north wind, which ſerved at once to ſpread the flames with more expedition through the town, and to render the miſeries of the poor people, who were expoſed in the open fields, the more intolerable. Men and women weeping and wailing, and bending under the weight of their furniture, fled to the neighbouring hills, which were covered with ſnow. Many palſied old men were carried thither on the ſhoulders of the young. Several of the women, who were newly delivered, fled with their babes in their arms, and periſhed together from the cold on the hills, throwing their laſt looks towards the flames, which conſumed their country. All the inhabitants had not time to quit the town before the Swedes ſet fire to it. The conflagration continued from midnight till ten in the morning. Almoſt all the houſes being of wood, they were entirely conſumed; and the next day there was not the leaſt appearance that there had been a town on that ſpot.

The aged, the ſick, and women of tender conſtitutions, who had taken refuge in the ſnow while their houſes were in flames, at laſt crawled to the gates of Hamburgh, and beſought the inhabitants to receive them within the walls, and to ſave their lives. But this was denied them, becauſe there had been ſome con-

contagious diſtempers in Altena, and the Hamburghers had not ſo great a regard for its inhabitants, as to expoſe themſelves to the danger of having their own town infected by receiving them. Thus did the greateſt part of theſe miſerable people expire under the walls of Hamburgh, calling on Heaven to witneſs the barbarity of the Swedes, and the treatment of the Hamburghers, which was not leſs inhuman.

ALL Germany cried out againſt this violence: the Miniſters and Generals of Poland and Denmark wrote to Count Steinbock, reproaching him with a cruelty ſo enormous, as, perpetrated without neceſſity, and remaining without excuſe, provoked the vengeance of Heaven and earth.

STEINBOCK replied, "that he ſhould not have carried things to ſuch extremities, except to teach the "enemies of the King his maſter, not to make war "for the future like barbarians, but to pay ſome re"gard to the laws of nations; that they had filled "Pomerania with their cruelties, laid waſte that "beautiful province, and ſold near an hundred "thouſand of the inhabitants to the Turks; and that "the torches, which had laid Altena in aſhes, were "but repriſals for the red-hot bullets by which Stade "had been conſumed."

SUSH

SUCH was the fury with which the Swedes and their enemies carried on the war. If Charles had appeared in Pomerania at this time, it is reaſonable to imagine he might have recovered his former good fortune. His armies, though removed at ſo great a diſtance from his perſon, were ſtill animated by his ſpirit; but the abſence of a Chief is always prejudicial to his affairs, and prevents even victories from being turned to account. Steinbock loſt piecemeal the great advantages he had gained, by ſuch ſignal actions as at another time would have proved deciſive.

VICTORIOUS as he was, he could not prevent the Ruſſians, Danes, and Saxons, from joining. His quarters were beat up: he loſt ſome troops in ſeveral little ſkirmiſhes: and two thouſand of his men were drowned in paſſing the Eider, as they were going to their winter-quarters in Holſtein. All theſe loſſes, in a country ſurrounded on every ſide by powerful enemies, were utterly irreparable.

HOLSTEIN was at this time governed by its young Duke Frederic, aged twelve years, nephew of the King of Sweden, and ſon of that Duke, who had been killed at the battle of Cliffau. The Biſhop of Lubeck, his uncle, governed this unhappy country with the title of Adminiſtrator, which its ſovereigns have never poſſeſſed in tranquillity.

THE

THE Biſhop, who feared for the States of his Ward, was deſirous to preſerve an apparent neutrality; but it was impoſſible to remain neuter between an army of the King of Sweden, whoſe heir the Duke of Holſtein might become, and the armies of the Allies ready to invade that State.

COUNT STEINBOCK, preſſed by the enemy, and no longer able to preſerve his ſmall army, ſummoned the Biſhop-Adminiſtrator to conſent to its being received within the fortreſs of Tonningen. The Biſhop found himſelf reduced either entirely to ſacrifice the King's army, or to draw upon Holſtein the vengeance of Denmark.

HE had recourſe to artifice, that dangerous reſource of the weak. He ordered Colonel Wolf, who commanded in Tonningen, to receive the Swediſh troops in his fortreſs; but at the ſame time exacted of that Officer, that he ſhould never mention that order, and Steinbock on his ſide took an oath to keep the negociation ſecret.

IT was neceſſary that Wolf ſhould take upon himſelf to receive the army in his garriſon, as of his own authority, and that he ſhould appear to diſobey the orders of his Soveriegn. All this fineſſe turned out unfortunately for the Duke, the country, and for Steinbock. The Czar, the King of Denmark, and the King of Pruſſia, blockaded Tonningen.

The

The proviſions which were to have come to this ſmall army failed by a fatality, which through this whole war ruined the affairs of Sweden.

At laſt Steinbock was forced to ſurrender himſelf priſoner to the King of Denmark, with his troops, on the 18th of March 1713. Thus was this army irretrievably diſſipated, which had gained the two celebrated victories of Helſimburg and Gadebuſh, under a General, of whom were entertained the higheſt expectations, and the King of Denmark had the ſatisfaction to hold as his priſoner the perſon, who had thwarted all his deſigns, and reduced his town of Altena to aſhes. Steinbock, when he quitted Tonningen, aſſured the King of Denmark that he had never entered that town but by ſtratagem, and that he had deceived the Governor. This Officer ſwore to the ſame thing, and preferred the diſhonour of having been ſurprized, to the divulging the ſecret of his maſter.

The Duke of Holſtein and the Biſhop-Adminiſtrator proteſted that they had obſerved the neutrality; they implored the mediation of the King of Pruſſia and the Elector of Hanover. But all this fineſſe not being ſupported by force, did not prevent the King of Denmark from beſieging Wolf in Tonningen a ſhort time afterwards, with his own troops and thoſe of the Czar. This commander ſurrendered as Steinbock had done, and at laſt confeſſed the ſecret of which the Danes had but too many ſuſpicions.

THIS furniſhed the King of Denmark with a pretext for taking poſſeſſion of the States of the Duke of Holſtein, which have never yet been entirely reſtored to him. This ſame King of Denmark, who ravaged without ſcruple the Dutchy of Holſtein, had yet the generoſity to treat Steinbock with conſideration, and gave an example that Kings are often more guided by their intereſts than their revenge. He left the incendiary of Altena free upon his parole at Copenhagen, and affected to heap favours upon him, till Steinbock having attempted to eſcape, had the misfortune to be ſtopped, and to be convicted of having broken his parole. Then he was ſtrictly guarded, and reduced to aſk pardon of the King of Denmark, who granted it to him.

POMERANIA being without defence, became a prey to the allies, excepting Stralſund, the Iſle of Rugen, and ſome neighbouring places, and was ſequeſtered in the hands of the King of Pruſſia. The States of Bremen were filled with Daniſh garriſons. At the ſame time the Ruſſians overran Finland, and beat the Swedes, who being inferior in point of numbers, and their reſolution forſaking them, they began to loſe their ſuperiority of valour over enemies, who now were inured to war.

To complete the misfortunes of Sweden, the King was obſtinately determined to remain at Demotica, and ſtill flattered himſelf with the hope of having aſſiſtance

tance from the Turks, in whom he ought no longer to have repoſed any confidence,

IBRAHIM MOLLA, that bold Vizier, who had been ſo obſtinately bent on a war with the Ruſſians, in oppoſition to the favourite, was ſtrangled between two doors.

THE place of Vizier was become ſo dangerous, that no one dared to accept of it; it continued vacant ſix months. At laſt the favourite, Ali-Coumourgi, aſſumed the title of Grand Vizier. Then were all the hopes of the King of Sweden cruſhed at once. He knew Coumourgi ſo much the better, as he had been ſerved by him when the intereſt of that favourite and his own happened to coincide.

CHARLES had now been eleven months at Demotica, buried in ſloth and oblivion: this extreme indolence ſucceeding ſo ſuddenly the moſt violent exerciſes, had at laſt actually given him the diſeaſe, which he had before feigned. His death was believed throughout Europe. The Council of Regency, which he had eſtabliſhed at Stockholm when he left his capital, no longer received any diſpatches from him. The Senate came in a body to the Princeſs Ulrica Eleonora, the King's ſiſter, and intreated her to take the Regency into her own hands, during the long abſence of her brother. She accepted the propoſal; but when ſhe perceived that the Senate wanted to oblige her to make a peace

a peace with the Czar and the King of Denmark, who attacked Sweden on every ſide, and well knowing that her brother would never ratify ſuch a peace, ſhe reſigned the Regency, and ſent into Turkey a long detail of the tranſaction.

CHARLES received his ſiſter's packet at Demotica. The arbitrary principles, which he had imbibed at his birth, made him forget that Sweden had formerly been free, and that in ancient times the Senate governed the kingdom conjointly with the King. He regarded this body as a parcel of domeſtics, who wanted to uſurp the command of the houſe in their maſter's abſence: he wrote to them, that if they pretended to aſſume the reins of government, he would ſend them one of his boots, from which he would oblige them to receive their orders.

To prevent therefore theſe pretended attempts upon his authority in Sweden, and to defend his kingdom, now in the laſt extremity, deprived of all hopes of aſſiſtance from the Ottoman Porte, and relying on himſelf alone, he ſignified to the Grand Vizier his deſire of departing and returning by the way of Germany.

M. DES ALLEURS, the French Ambaſſador, who was charged with the affairs of Sweden, made the propoſal in his name. "Well," ſaid the Vizier to him, "did not I tell you, that a year would not "paſs

"paſs before the King of Sweden would deſire to "depart? Tell him, it is at his choice to go or "ſtay; but let him come to a fixed determination, "and appoint the day of his departure, that he "may not a ſecond time embarraſs us as he did at "Bender."

COUNT DES ALLEURS ſoftened the harſhneſs of this anſwer to the King. The day was accordingly fixed; but before Charles would leave Turkey, he reſolved to diſplay the pomp of a great King, though involved in all the difficulties of a fugitive. He gave Grothuſen the title of his Ambaſſador Extraordinary, and ſent him to take leave in form at Conſtantinople, followed by a retinue of eighty perſons, all ſuperbly dreſſed.

THE divers ſtratagems, to which he was reduced in order to raiſe a ſufficiency to defray this expence, were as humiliating as the embaſſy was pompous.

M. DES ALLEURS lent the King forty thouſand crowns. Grothuſen had agents at Conſtantinople, who borrowed in his name, at the rate of fifty per cent. intereſt, a thouſand crowns of a Jew, two hundred piſtoles of an Engliſh Merchant, and a thouſand livres of a Turk.

IN this manner did they amaſs a ſum ſufficient to enable them to act, in the preſence of the Divan, the brilliant

brilliant comedy of the Swediſh embaſſy. Grothuſen received at Conſtantinople all the honours that the Porte uſually pay to Kings' Ambaſſadors-Extraordinary on the day of their audience. The deſign of all this parade was only to obtain money from the Grand Vizier; but that Miniſter was inexorable.

GROTHUSEN propoſed borrowing a million from the Porte. The Vizier replied coldly, that his maſter knew how to give when he thought proper, but that it was beneath his dignity to lend; that the King ſhould be furniſhed with abundance of every thing neceſſary for his journey, in a manner worthy of the perſon that ſent him back; and that the Porte, perhaps, might even make him a preſent in gold bullion, but that That was not to be looked upon as certain.

AT laſt, on the 1ſt of October, 1714, the King of Sweden ſet out on his journey from Turkey. A Capigi Pacha, with ſix chiaoux, came to attend him from the caſtle of Demirtaſh, where that Prince had reſided for ſome days paſt: he preſented him, in the name of the Grand Seignior, with a large tent of ſcarlet embroidered with gold, a ſabre, with the guard mounted with jewels, and eight beautiful Arabian horſes, with fine ſaddles, and ſtirrups of maſſy ſilver. It is not beneath the dignity of hiſtory to obſerve, that the Arabian equerry, who had had the care of the horſes, gave the King an account of their genealogy; a cuſtom which hath been long eſtabliſhed among theſe people, who ſeem to pay more attention to the nobility

nobility of their horſes, than to that of their men; which is not perhaps ſo unreaſonable, as among animals, thoſe breeds of which care is taken, and which are not croſſed, are never found to degenerate.

SIXTY waggons loaded with all ſorts of proviſions, and three hundred horſe comprized the convoy. The Capigi Pacha, underſtanding that ſeveral Turks had lent money to the King of Sweden's attendants at an immoderate intereſt, told his Majeſty, that uſury being contrary to the Mahometan law, he intreated him to liquidate all theſe debts, and to order his Reſident, whom he ſhould leave at Conſtantinople, to pay no more than the capital. "No," ſaid the King, "if any of my domeſtics have given bills for an hun-"dred crowns, I will pay them, though they ſhould "not even have received ten."

HE made a propoſal to his creditors to follow him, with an aſſurance that he would not only pay them what he owed, but all their expences. Several of them went to Sweden; and Grothuſen took care to ſee them paid.

THE Turks, in order to ſhew the greateſt deference to their royal gueſt, made him travel by very ſhort ſtages; but this reſpectful motion was ill ſuited to the impatient ſpirit of the King. During the journey, he got up at three in the morning, according to his uſual cuſtom. As ſoon as he was dreſſed, he went himſelf and awakened the Capigi and Chiaoux, and ordered

ordered the march during the darkneſs of the night. The Turkiſh gravity was deranged by this new method of travelling; but Charles took a pleaſure in ſeeing them embarraſſed, and ſaid, it was ſome little revenge for the affair of Bender.

About the time that Charles reached the frontiers of Turkey, Staniſlaus was leaving them by a different road and going into Germany, with a view of retiring into the Dutchy, of Deux-Ponts, a province bordering on the Palatinate of Alſace and the Rhine, and which has belonged to the Kings of Sweden ever ſince Charles X. the ſucceſſor of Chriſtina, had united it to the crown. Charles aſſigned to Staniſlaus the revenue of this Dutchy, eſtimated at that time at about ſeventy thouſand crowns. Such was the iſſue of ſo many projects, wars, and expectations! Staniſlaus could and would have made an advantageous treaty with Auguſtus; but the inflexible obſtinacy of Charles made him loſe his lands and real poſſeſſions in Poland, to preſerve the title of King.

This Prince remained in the Dutchy of Deux-Ponts till the death of Charles XII. When that province reverted to a Prince of the Palatine family, he choſe his retreat in Wiſſemburg in French Alſace. Mr. Sum, Envoy from King Auguſtus, making a complaint of this to the Duke of Orleans, Regent of France, the Duke returned him an anſwer in theſe remarkable words:

"Sir, tell the King, your maſter, that France has "ever been the aſylum of Kings in diſtreſs."

THE King of Sweden being arrived on the confines of Germany, was given to underſtand, that the Emperor had given orders to receive him in every part of his dominions with a becoming magnificence. The towns and villages, through which the Quarter-maſters had previouſly fixed his route, had made great preparations for receiving him; all the people waited with impatience to ſee this extraordinary man paſs by, whoſe victories and misfortunes, whoſe moſt trifling actions, and even his keeping his bed, had made ſo great a noiſe in Europe and Aſia. But Charles had no deſire to bear the fatigue of ſo much pomp, or to exhibit as a ſpectacle the priſoner of Bender; he had even reſolved never to re-enter Stockholm, until he ſhould have repaired his loſſes by a change of fortune.

WHEN he arrived at Targowitz on the frontiers of Tranſilvania, after he had taken leave of his Turkiſh Convoy, he aſſembled his attendants in a barn, and told them all not to give themſelves any uneaſineſs about his perſon, but to proceed with all poſſible expedition to Stralſund in Pomerania, on the coaſt of the Baltic ſea, about three hundred leagues from the place where they then were.

He took nobody with him except two Officers, Roſen and During, and taking a cheerful leave of the reſt of his attendants, left them filled with fear, ſorrow, and aſtoniſhment. To diſguiſe himſelf he put on a black wig, as he always wore his own hair; a gold-laced hat, a grey coat, and blue cloak, and, taking the name of a German Officer, rode poſt with his two fellow-travellers.

He avoided in his way as much as poſſible the territories of either his declared or ſecret enemies, taking the road through Hungary, Moravia, Bavaria, Auſtria, Wirtemberg, the Palatinate, Weſtphalia, and Mecklenburg; by which means he almoſt made the tour of Germany, and lengthened his journey by one half. Having rode the whole firſt day without intermiſſion, young During, who was not ſo much inured to theſe exceſſive fatigues, fainted as he was diſmounting. The King, who was determined not to ſtop a moment on the road, aſked During, as ſoon as he came to himſelf, how much money he had. Upon During's replying, he had about a thouſand crowns in gold, "Give me half of them," ſaid the King, "I ſee you are not in a condition to follow "me; I will therefore finiſh the journey by myſelf." During begged he would permit him to repoſe himſelf but for three hours, aſſuring him that by that time he ſhould be able to remount his horſe and attend his Majeſty, and conjured him to think of the dangers

gers to which he was going to expoſe himſelf. The King, inexorable, made him give him five hundred crowns, and called for horſes. During, alarmed at this reſolution, bethought himſelf of an innocent ſtratagem; he took the Poſt-maſter aſide, and pointing to the King of Sweden, "That gentleman," ſaid he, "is my couſin; we are travelling together "upon the ſame buſineſs; he ſees that I am ill, and "yet will not wait for me even for three hours; "give him, I beſeech you, the worſt horſe in "your ſtable; and let me have a cart or any poſt-"carriage.

He ſlipt two ducats into the Poſt-maſter's hand who exactly performed his orders: the King had a horſe given him that was both lame and reſtive: ſuch was the equipage, with which this Monarch ſet out at ten o'clock at night, amidſt darkneſs, rain, wind, and ſnow. His fellow-traveller, after having ſlept a few hours, followed him in a cart drawn by ſtrong horſes.

About day-break, at the diſtance of a few miles, he overtook the King, who not being able to make his horſe move on, was travelling on foot to the next ſtage.

Charles was obliged to get into During's cart, where he ſlept upon the ſtraw. Thus they continued their

their journey, by day on horſeback, and ſleeping by night in a cart, without ſtopping in any place.

AFTER ſixteen days travelling, not without danger of being taken more than once, they arrived at laſt, on the twenty-firſt of November in the year 1714, at the gates of the town of Stralſund, about one in the morning.

THE King called to the centinel, and told him that he was a Courier diſpatched from Turkey by the King of Sweden, and that he muſt ſpeak that moment with General Ducker, the Governor of the place. The centinel anſwered that it was too late; that the Governor was gone to bed; and that he muſt wait till break of day.

THE King replied, that he came upon buſineſs of importance, and told them, that if they did not inſtantly go and awake the governor, they ſhould be puniſhed the next morning. A Serjeant, at laſt, went and called up the governor. Ducker imagined that it might perhaps be one of the King's Generals; he therefore cauſed the gates to be opened, and the Courier was introduced into his chamber.

DUCKER, half aſleep, aſked him "what news of "the King of Sweden?" The King taking him by the arm. "What," ſaid he, "Ducker, have my

"moſt

" moſt faithful ſubjects forgot me?" The General immediately recollected the King, though he could ſcarce believe his eyes; and throwing himſelf from the bed, embraced his maſter's knees with tears of joy. The news was in an inſtant ſpread through the town. Every one got up: the ſoldiers ſurrounded the Governor's houſe. The ſtreets were crowded with the inhabitants, aſking each other whether it was true that the King was come. Every window was illuminated, wine ran through the ſtreets, amidſt the blaze of a thouſand flambeaux, and the diſcharges of the artillery.

In the mean time the King was put into a bed, in which he had not been for above ſixteen days: his boots were obliged to be cut from his legs, they being ſo much ſwollen by his extreme fatigue. As he had neither linen nor clothes, they furniſhed him a wardrobe as well as the town could afford, with all expedition. When he had ſlept a few hours he aroſe, and went directly to review his troops, and viſit his fortifications. The ſame day he diſpatched orders into all parts for renewing the war againſt his enemies with greater vigour than ever. Theſe particulars, ſo conformable to the extraordinary character of Charles XII. were communicated to me by M. Fabricius, and afterwards confirmed by Count Croiſſy, Ambaſſador to the King of Sweden.

THE

THE Chriſtian part of Europe was now in a ſituation far different from that in which it was when Charles quitted it in 1709.

THE war, which had ſo long raged through the South, that is to ſay, in Germany, England, Holland, France, Spain, Portugal, and Italy, was now terminated. This general peace had been brought about by ſome private intrigues in the Engliſh Court. The Earl of Oxford, an able Miniſter, and Lord Bolingbroke, one of the greateſt geniuſes and the moſt elequent orator of the age, had prevailed over the famous Duke of Marlborough, and perſuaded the Queen to make a peace with Lewis XIV. France, having no longer England for her enemy, ſoon obliged the other Powers to come to an accommodation.

PHILIP V. the grandſon of Lewis XIV. began to reign peaceably over the ruins of the Spaniſh Monarchy. The Emperor of Germany, become maſter of Naples and Flanders, eſtabliſhed himſelf in his vaſt dominions; and Lewis himſelf aſpired no higher than to finiſh in peace his long career.

ANNE Queen of England died on the 10th of Auguſt 1714, hated by half the nation for having given peace to ſo many kingdoms. Her brother James Stuart, an unhappy Prince, excluded from the throne

almoſt

almoſt at his birth, not being at that time in England to claim the ſucceſſion, which new laws would have given him, if his party could have prevailed, George I. Elector of Hanover was unanimouſly acknowleged King of Great Britain. The throne devolved to that Elector, not by right of blood, though deſcended from a daughter of James, but by virtue of an Act of Parliament of that nation.

GEORGE, called in an advanced age to the government of a people, whoſe language he did not underſtand, and to whom he was an entire ſtranger, regarded himſelf rather as Elector of Hanover, than King of England. His whole ambition was to aggrandize his German dominions. He almoſt always went once a-year to viſit his hereditary ſubjects, by whom he was adored. In other reſpects he took more pleaſure in living like a private man, than a Sovereign. The pomp of royalty was to him an inſupportable burden. He paſſed his time with a few old courtiers, with whom he lived in great familiarity. He was not the King that made the greateſt figure in Europe; but he was one of the wiſeſt Princes of the age, and perhaps the only one that experienced on a throne the pleaſures of friendſhip and a private life. Such were the principal Monarchs, and ſuch the ſituation of the South of Europe.

THE changes that happened in the North were of another nature. Its Kings were engaged in war, and united themſelves againſt the King of Sweden.

AUGUSTUS

AUGUSTUS had been long reſtored to the throne of Poland by the aſſiſtance of the Czar, and with the conſent of the Emperor of Germany, of Anne of England, and of the States-General; who, though all guarantees of the treaty of Altranſtad, when Charles XII. could have impoſed laws, abandoned their engagement, when they had nothing more to fear from him.

BUT Auguſtus did not enjoy a tranquil authority. The Republic of Poland no ſooner recalled their King, than their apprehenſions of arbitrary power began to revive: the nation was in arms to oblige him to conform to the *pacta conventa*, a ſacred contract between the King and the people, and ſeemed to have recalled its Sovereign for no other purpoſe than to declare war againſt him. At the commencement of theſe troubles, the name of Staniſlaus was not once mentioned: his party ſeemed to be annihilated; no other remembrance of the King of Sweden remained in Poland than as of a torrent, which in the violence of its courſe, had for a time occaſioned a change in the face of nature.

PULTOWA and the abſence of Charles XII. by cauſing the fall of Staniſlaus, had drawn on the ruin alſo of the Duke of Holſtein, Charles's nephew, who had not long before been deſpoiled of his dominions by the King of Denmark. The King of Sweden had had a ſincere regard for the father, and was therefore deeply affected and mortified with the misfortunes of the

the ſon; the rather, as, having no other object than glory, the fall of thoſe Princes whom he had either made or reſtored, was by him felt as ſenſibly as the loſs of ſo many provinces.

EVERY one was at liberty to enrich himſelf with the ruin of Charles's fortune. Frederic-William the new King of Pruſſia, who appeared to have as much inclination for war as his father had had for peace, began by ſeizing on Stettin and part of Pomerania, as an equivalent for four hundred thouſand crowns, which he had advanced to the King of Denmark, and to the Czar.

GEORGE Elector of Hanover, now become King of England, had likewiſe ſequeſtered into his hands the Dutchy of Bremen and Verden, which the King of Denmark had aſſigned to him, as a depoſit for ſixty thouſand piſtoles. Thus did they diſpoſe of the ſpoils of Charles XII. and thoſe, who poſſeſſed any of his dominions as pledges, became, from their intereſts, as dangerous enemies as thoſe who had taken them.

As to the Czar, he was doubtleſs the moſt to be feared: his former defeats, his victories, his very faults, his perſeverance to inſtruct himſelf, and then to communicate that knowledge to his ſubjects, together with his inceſſant labours, had made him a great man in every reſpect. Riga was already

taken; Livonia, Ingria, Carelia, half of Finland, ſo many provinces that had been conquered by Charles's anceſtors, were now ſubjected to the Ruſſian yoke.

PETER ALEXIOWITZ, who, twenty years before, had not a ſingle veſſel in the Baltic, at this time beheld himſelf maſter of that ſea, at the head of a fleet of thirty ſhips of the line.

ONE of theſe ſhips had been built by his own hands; he being the beſt carpenter, the beſt Admiral, and the beſt pilot in the North. There was not a difficult paſſage of the Gulph of Bothnia to the Ocean, which he had not ſounded himſelf; and having thus joined the labours of a common ſailor, to the experience of a Philoſopher and the plans of an Emperor, he arrived by degrees, and by dint of victories, to the rank of Admiral, in the ſame manner as he had become a General in the land ſervice.

WHILE Prince Gallitzin, a General formed under his own auſpices, and one of thoſe who ſeconded his enterprizes the beſt, completed the conqueſt of Finland, took the town of Vaſa, and beat the Swedes: the Emperor put to ſea, in order to take the iſland of Aland, ſituated in the Baltic, about twelve leagues from Stockholm.

HE

He ſet out on this expedition in the beginning of July 1714, at the time that his rival Charles XII. was keeping his bed at Demotica. He embarked at Gronſlot port, which he had built ſome years before, about four miles from Petersburgh. The new port, the fleet which it contained, the officers, the ſailors, were all the work of his own hands; and wherever he turned his eyes, he could behold nothing but what he himſelf had in ſome meaſure created.

The Ruſſian fleet, which conſiſted of thirty ſhips of the line, eighty gallies, and an hundred half gallies found itſelf on the 15th of July on the coaſt of Aland. There were twenty thouſand ſoldiers on board: Admiral Apraxin was Commander in Chief; and the Ruſſian Emperor ſerved in the capacity of Rear-Admiral. On the ſixteenth the Swediſh fleet, commanded by Vice-Admiral Erinchild, came up; and, though weaker by two-thirds, maintained a fight for the ſpace of three hours. The Czar attacked Erinchild's ſhip, and took her after an obſtinate engagement.

The day of the victory he landed ſixteen thouſand men on the Iſle of Aland; and having taken a number of Swediſh ſoldiers that had not been able to get on board Erinchild's fleet, he carried them off in his own ſhips. He returned into his harbour of Gronſlot with Erinchild's large ſhip, three others of leſs ſize, one frigate,

frigate, and ſix gallies, which he had made himſelf maſter of in this engagement.

HAVING left Gronſlot, he arrived at Petersburgh, followed by the whole of his victorious fleet, together with the ſhips taken from the enemy. He was ſaluted by a triple diſcharge of an hundred and fifty pieces of cannon; after which he made a triumphal entry, which flattered his vanity ſtill more than that at Moſcow, becauſe he received theſe honours in his favourite town, where but ten years before there was not a ſingle hut, and where at that time he beheld thirty four thouſand five hundred houſes; in ſhort, becauſe he ſaw himſelf not only at the head of a victorious navy, but of the firſt Ruſſian fleet that was ever ſeen in the Baltic ſea, and in a country in which, before his time, the very name of a fleet was unknown.

ALMOST the ſame ceremonies were obſerved at Petersburgh, which had decorated the triumph at Moſcow. The Swediſh Vice-Admiral was the principal ornament of this new triumph. Peter Alexiowitz appeared as Rear-Admiral. A Ruſſian boyard named Romanodowſky, who uſually repreſented the Czar on theſe ſolemn occaſions, was ſeated on a throne ſurrounded by twelve Senators. The Rear-Admiral preſented to him a relation of his victory, and was declared Vice-Admiral, in conſideration of his ſervices; a whimſical ceremony, but at the ſame time

time proper in a country, where military ſubordination was one of the novelties, which the Czar had introduced.

THE Emperor of Ruſſia, at laſt victorious over the Swedes by ſea and land, and having aſſiſted in driving them from Poland, began to exerciſe his authority there in his turn. He had made himſelf a mediator between Auguſtus and the Republic; a glory perhaps not inferior to that of creating a King. This honour, and indeed all the good fortune of Charles, had fallen to the Czar, who certainly made a better uſe of theſe advantages than his rival, as his ſucceſſes were ſo managed as to contribute to the intereſt of his country. If he took a town, the principal artiſans in it carried their induſtry along with them to Peterſburgh. The manufacturers, the arts and ſciences of the provinces, which he conquered in Sweden, were tranſported into Muſcovy; his dominions were enriched by his victories; a circumſtance that makes him the moſt excuſable of all conquerors.

SWEDEN, on the contrary, deſpoiled of almoſt all her provinces beyond ſea, had neither commerce, money, nor credit. Her veteran troops, which were formerly ſo formidable, had either fallen in battle, or periſhed with hunger. More than an hundred thouſand Swedes were ſlaves in the vaſt dominions of the Czar; and about the ſame number had been

been ſold to the Turks and Tartars. The human ſpecies viſibly diminiſhed, but hope revived as ſoon as the King was known to be at Stralſund.

THE impreſſions of reſpect and admiration for him were ſtill ſo ſtrongly implanted in the minds of his ſubjects, that the youth of the country came in crowds to enliſt under his banners, though their native ſoil wanted hands to cultivate it.



BOOK

BOOK VIII.

ARGUMENT.

Charles gives his Siſter in Marriage to the Prince of Heſſe.—Is beſieged at Stralſund, and eſcapes to Sweden.—Enterprize of Baron de Gortz, his Prime Miniſter.—Plan of a Reconciliation with the Czar, and of a Deſcent upon England.—Charles beſieges Frederickſhall in Norway.—Is killed.—His Character.—Gortz is beheaded.

THE King, in the midſt of theſe preparations gave his only ſurviving ſiſter, Ulrica-Eleonora, in marriage to Frederick Prince of Heſſe Caſſel. The Queen-dowager, grandmother of Charles XII. and the Princeſs, at that time in the eightieth year of her age, did the honours of this feſtival, on the fourth of April 1715, in the palace of Stockholm, and died a little time after.

THE marriage was not honoured with the preſence of the King; he was ſtill at Stralſund, finiſhing the fortifications of that important place, threatened with a ſiege by the Kings of Denmark and Pruſſia. He declared, however, his brother-in-law Generaliſſimo of all his forces in Sweden. This Prince had ſerved the

the States-General in their wars with the French, and was eſteemed a good General; a qualification which contributed not a little to procure him the ſiſter of Charles XII. in marriage.

MISFORTUNES now followed one another as rapidly as victories had formerly done. In the month of June 1715, the German troops of the King of England, with thoſe of Denmark, inveſted the ſtrong town of Wiſmar: the Danes and Saxons united, formed about thirty ſix-thouſand men, who marched towards Stralſund, to form the ſiege of that place. The Kings of Denmark and Pruſſia ſunk five Swediſh ſhips near to Stralſund. The Czar was then in the Baltic, with twenty large ſhips of war, and an hundred and fifty tranſports, on board of which were thirty thouſand men. He menaced a deſcent upon Sweden; ſometimes advancing near to the coaſt of Helſimburgh, and at others appearing before Stockholm. All Sweden was in arms upon the coaſts, every moment expecting an invaſion. In the mean time, the Czar's land forces drove the Swedes from poſt to poſt, until they had diſpoſſeſſed them of all the places they ſtill held in Finland, toward the Gulph of Bothnia; but the Czar carried his conqueſts no farther.

AT the mouth of the Oder, a river that divides Pomerania, and after waſhing the walls of Stettin, falls into the Baltic ſea, is the little Iſle of Uſedom; this place is of great importance on account of its ſituation,

tion, which commands the Oder, both on the right and left; ſo that the perſon, who is maſter of this iſland, is at the ſame time maſter of the navigation of the river. The King of Pruſſia had diſlodged the Swedes from this place, and had taken poſſeſſion of it, as well as of Stettin, which he kept ſequeſtered, and all, as he ſaid, *pour l'amour de la paix*, i. e. "for "the love of peace." The Swedes had taken Uſedom, in the month of May 1715. They had two forts there; one of which was the fort of Suine, upon a branch of the Oder that bore the ſame name; the other, a place of more conſequence, was called Pennamender, ſituated upon the other branch of the river. The King of Sweden had but two hundred and fifty Pomeranian ſoldiers to defend theſe two forts and the whole iſland, commanded by an old Swediſh Officer named Kuze-Slerp, whoſe name deſerves to be preſerved.

On the fourth of Auguſt, the King of Pruſſia ſent fifteen hundred foot and eight hundred dragoons to make a deſcent upon the iſland, and they landed without oppoſition near the fort of Suine. The Swediſh Commander abandoned this fort to the enemy, as being the leaſt important; and, as he could not ſafely divide his men, he retired with his little troop to the caſtle of Pennamender, reſolute to defend it to the laſt extremity.

THERE was, therefore, a neceſſity of beſieging it in form. A train of artillery was embarked at Stettin for this effect, and the Pruſſian troops were reinforced with a thouſand foot and four hundred horſe. On the eighteenth of Auguſt, the trenches were opened in two places, and the fort was briſkly battered with cannon and mortars. During the ſiege, a Swediſh ſoldier, who was charged with a private letter from Charles XII. found means to land on the iſland, to get into the fort of Pennamender, and to deliver the letter to the Commander; it was couched in the following words; "Do not fire till the enemy come to the "brink of the foſſe; defend the place to the laſt drop "of your blood; I commend you to your good for-"tune. CHARLES."

SLERP having read the note, reſolved to obey, and to lay down his life, as he was ordered, for the ſervice of his maſter. On the twenty-ſecond, at the break of day, the enemy began the aſſault: the beſieged having kept in their fire till they ſaw the beſiegers on the brink of the foſſe, killed a great number of them; but the ditch was full, the breach enlarged, and the aſſailants too numerous. They entered the caſtle at two different places at one time. The Commander thought of nothing but of ſelling his life as dear as poſſible, and obeying his maſter's letter. He abandoned the breaches, through which the enemy entered; intrenched his little company,

which

which had all the courage and fidelity to follow him, behind a baſtion, and poſted them in ſuch a manner that they could not be ſurrounded. The enemy came up to him, aſtoniſhed that he did not aſk for quarter. He fought for a whole hour; and after having loſt the half of his men was at laſt killed, together with his Lieutenant and Major. After this, the ſurviving few, amounting to an hundred ſoldiers and one Officer, begged their lives, and were made priſoners of war. They found Charles's letter in the Commander's pocket, and carried it to the King of Pruſſia.

At the time that Charles loſt Uſedom and the neighbouring Iſles, which were ſoon after taken, that Wiſmar was ready to ſurrender; that he no longer poſſeſſed a fleet, and Sweden was threatened with an invaſion; he himſelf was in Stralſund, and that place was already beſieged by thirty-ſix thouſand men.

Stralsund, a town become famous throughout Europe for the ſiege, which the King of Sweden ſuſtained in it, is the ſtrongeſt place in Pomerania. It is ſituated between the Baltic ſea and the Lake of Franken, upon the Straits of Gella; having no entrance to it by land, except by a narrow cauſeway, defended by a citadel, and by fortifications, which were imagined inacceſſible. It had a garriſon of about nine thouſand men, and, what was beyond all, the King of Sweden himſelf. The Kings of Den-

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mark and Pruſſia undertook the ſiege of this place with an army of ſix and thirty thouſand men, compoſed of Pruſſians, Danes, and Saxons.

The honour of beſieging Charles XII. was ſo powerful a motive, that they ſoon ſurmounted every obſtacle, and opened the trenches in the night between the nineteenth and twentieth of October 1715. The King of Sweden, at the beginning of the ſiege, ſaid, that he could not comprehend, how a place well fortified, and provided with a ſufficient garriſon, could be taken. Not but that in the courſe of his paſt victories he had taken ſeveral places himſelf, but hardly ever by a regular ſiege: the terror of his arms had carried every thing before them: beſides, he never judged of other people by himſelf, but always entertained too low an opinion of his enemies. The beſiegers carried on their works with vigour and reſolution, and were ſeconded by a very ſingular accident.

It is well known that the Baltic ſea neither ebbs nor flows. The intrenchments, which covered the town, and which were defended on the weſt by an impaſſable moraſs, and by the ſea on the eaſt, ſeemed to be ſecure from every aſſault. Nobody had ever noticed, that when the weſt wind blew with any violence, the waves of the Baltic were driven back in ſuch a manner, as to leave but three feet depth of water under the fortifications, which had always been

ſuppoſed

ſuppoſed to be waſhed by ſo great a depth of water as to be impracticable. A ſoldier having fallen from the top of the fortifications into the ſea, was aſtoniſhed to find a bottom: he imagined that this diſcovery might make his fortune, and accordingly deſerted, and went to the quarters of Count Wackerbarth, General of the Saxon troops, to inform him that the ſea was fordable, and that he might penetrate without much difficulty to the Swediſh fortifications. The King of Pruſſia did not delay to profit by this intelligence.

In the middle of the next night, the weſt wind ſtill continuing, Lieutenant Colonel Koppen entered the water, followed by eighteen hundred men; two thouſand advanced at the ſame time upon the cauſeway that led to the fort: all the Pruſſian artillery fired, and the Danes and Pruſſians gave an alarm on the other ſide.

The Swedes imagined themſelves ſure of deſtroying the two thouſand men whom they ſaw advancing with ſo much apparent raſhneſs upon the cauſeway; but all of a ſudden, Koppen, with his eighteen hundred men, entered the intrenchment on the ſide towards the ſea. The Swedes, ſurrounded and ſurpriſed, could make no reſiſtance, and the poſt was carried after a terrible carnage. Some of the Swedes fled towards the town: the beſiegers purſued them thither, and entered pell-mell along with the fugitives;

tives: two Officers and four Saxon ſoldiers were already on the draw-bridge, which the Swedes had juſt time to raiſe; ſo that the men were taken, and the town ſaved for that time.

THE enemy found in the fort twenty-four pieces of cannon, which they immediately turned againſt Stralſund. The ſiege was puſhed with ſuch vigour and confidence, as this ſucceſs could not fail to inſpire. The town was cannonaded and bombarded almoſt without intermiſſion.

OPPOSITE to Stralſund, in the Baltic ſea, is the Iſle of Rugen, which ſerves as a bulwark to that place, and into which the garriſon and citizens might have retired, had they had boats to have tranſported them thither. This iſland was of great conſequence to Charles: he ſaw very clearly, that if the enemy were once maſters of it, he ſhould find himſelf beſieged both by ſea and land; and perhaps be reduced to ſo great extremities, that he muſt either bury himſelf in the ruins of Stralſund, or become a priſoner to thoſe very enemies, on whom he had impoſed the moſt ſevere laws. But notwithſtanding all this, the unhappy ſituation of his affairs did not permit him to place a ſufficient garriſon in Rugen, in which there were not more than two thouſand men.

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His enemies had been employed for three months before, in making all the neceſſary preparations for a deſcent upon this iſland, upon which it is exceedingly difficult to effect a landing. At laſt, having finiſhed a number of boats, the Prince of Anhalt, with the aſſiſtance of favourable weather, landed twelve thouſand men upon Rugen, on the 15th of November. The King, who ſeemed to be preſent every where, was at that time in the iſland; he had juſt before joined his two thouſand men, who were intrenched near a ſmall port, three leagues from the place where the enemy had landed; he immediately put himſelf at the head of this little troop, and, obſerving the moſt profound ſilence, advanced in the middle of the night towards the enemy. The Prince of Anhalt had already intrenched his forces, with a precaution which appeared unneceſſary. The Officers commanding under him had no idea of being attacked the very firſt night, and imagined Charles to be at Stralſund; but the Prince of Anhalt, who well knew what Charles was capable of, had cauſed a deep foſſe to be ſunk, fenced with a chevaux-de-friſe, and taken all his meaſures with as much circumſpection, as if he had had a ſuperior army to contend with.

At two in the morning Charles came up with his enemies, without making the leaſt noiſe. His ſoldiers ſaying to each other, "Pull up the chevaux-de-friſe," the words were overheard by the ſentinels, the alarm was

was immediately given through the camp, and the enemy were inſtantly under arms. The King, having taken up the chevaux-de-friſe, perceived a deep foſſe before him. "Ah!" ſaid he, "is it poſſible? I did "not expect this." However, this ſurprize did not diſcourage him. He knew not the number of troops landed; the enemy alſo, on their ſide, were ignorant what a ſmall number they had to engage with. The darkneſs of the night ſeemed favourable to Charles; he took his reſolution in a moment, and jumped into the ditch, accompanied by the braveſt of his men, and was inſtantly followed by the reſt: the chevaux-de-friſe, which were plucked up, the levelled earth, the trunks and branches of ſuch trees as they could find, and the carcaſes of the ſoldiers that were killed by random ſhot, ſerved for faſcines. The King, the Generals, and the braveſt of the Officers and ſoldiers, mounted upon one another's ſhoulders as in an aſſault. The battle is now fought in the enemy's camp. The impetuoſity of the Swedes ſoon threw the Danes and Pruſſians into confuſion; but the numbers were too unequal; the Swedes were repulſed, after fighting for a quarter of an hour, and were obliged to repaſs the foſſe. The Prince of Anhalt purſued them into the plain, but knew not that it was Charles XII. that fled before him. That unfortunate King rallied his troops in the open field, and the battle was renewed with equal obſtinacy on both ſides. Grothuſen, the King's favourite, and General Dardoff fell dead at his feet. In the heat of the

the battle Charles paſſed over the body of the latter, who was ſtill breathing. During, the only perſon who had accompanied him in his journey from Turkey to Stralſund, was killed before his face.

In the midſt of the tumult, a Daniſh Lieutenant, whoſe name I have never been able to learn, recognized the King; and ſeizing his ſword with one hand, and with the other pulling him violently by the hair, ſaid to him, "Yield, Sire, or I kill you." The King had a piſtol in his belt, which he fired with his left hand at the officer, who died of the wound the next morning. The name of King Charles, which the Dane had pronounced, immediately drew a crowd of the enemy together. The King was ſurrounded, and received a muſket-ſhot below the nipple of his left breaſt: this wound, which he called a contuſion, was two fingers deep. The King was on foot, and in danger of either being killed or taken priſoner. Count Poniatowsky was fighting at this time near his Majeſty's perſon. He had ſaved his life at Pultowa, and had now the good fortune to ſave it once more in the battle of Rugen; he ſet him on horſe-back.

The Swedes retired to a part of the iſland called Alteferra, where there was a fort, of which they were ſtill maſters. From thence the King repaſſed over to Stralſund, obliged to abandon his brave

troops, who had ſo well ſeconded him in this enterprize; and two days after they were all made priſoners of war.

AMONG the priſoners was that unhappy French regiment, compoſed of the ſhattered remains of the battle of Hochſtet, which had entered into the ſervice of Auguſtus, and afterwards into that of the King of Sweden. The greateſt part of the ſoldiers were now incorporated into a new regiment, commanded by the Prince of Anhalt's ſon, who was their fourth maſter.

THE Commander of this wandering regiment in the Iſle of Rugen was the ſame Count de Villelongue, who had ſo generouſly expoſed his life at Adrianople in the ſervice of Charles. He was taken priſoner with his troop, and was afterwards but poorly recompenſed for all his ſervices, labours, and ſufferings.

THE King, after all theſe prodigies of valour, which ſerved only to weaken his forces, ſhut up in Stralſund, and near being forced in it, was the ſame he had been at Bender. He was ſhaken by nothing; he employed the day in making ditches and intrenchments behind the walls, and in the night he made ſallies upon the enemy: in the mean time Stralſund was battered in breach: the bombs fell as thick as hail upon the houſes, and half the town was reduced to aſhes: the citizens, however, ſo far from complaining, were

filled

filled with the higheſt veneration for their Royal maſter, whoſe fatigues, temperance, and courage aſtoniſhed them; they were all become ſoldiers under him; they accompanied him in all his ſallies, and ſerved him in the place of a ſecond garriſon.

ONE day, as the King was dictating ſome letters to his Secretary, to be ſent to Sweden, a bomb fell on the houſe, pierced the roof, and burſt near the apartment in which he was. One half of the floor was ſhattered to pieces; the cloſet where the King was employed, being partly formed out of a thick wall, did not ſuffer by the exploſion; and, by an aſtoniſhing piece of fortune, none of the ſplinters that flew about in the air entered at the cloſet-door, which happened to be open. The report of the bomb, and the noiſe it occaſioned in the houſe, which ſeemed ready to tumble, made the Secretary drop his pen. "What is the matter," ſaid the King with a placid air, "why do you not write?" The Secretary could only ſay, "Ah, Sire, the bomb!" "Well," replied the King, "what has the bomb to do with "the letter I am dictating to you? Go on."

THERE was, at this time, an Ambaſſador of France ſhut up with the King of Sweden at Stralſund. It was Monſieur Colbert, Count de Croiſſy, a Lieuntenant-General in the French army, brother to the Marquis de Torcy, the celebrated Miniſter of State, and a relation of the famous Colbert, whoſe name ought to be immortal

immortal in France. To ſend a man into the trenches or on an embaſſy to Charles XII. was pretty nigh the ſame thing. The King would talk with Croiſſy for whole hours together in the moſt expoſed places, while the ſoldiers were falling on every ſide of them by the fire of the cannon and bombs, without appearing in the leaſt ſenſible of the risk he run, and the Ambaſſador not chuſing to give his Majeſty ſo much as a hint that there were more proper places to talk of buſineſs. This Miniſter did every thing he was able, before the ſiege began, to effect an accommodation between the Kings of Sweden and Pruſſia; but the demands of the latter were too high, and Charles would make no conceſſions. Count de Croiſſy derived no other ſatisfaction from his embaſſy, than the pleaſure of enjoying the familiarity of that ſingular man. He often lay by his Majeſty upon the ſame cloak, and had by partaking of all his dangers and fatigues, acquired a right of talking to him with freedom. Charles encouraged this boldneſs in thoſe he loved; and would ſometimes ſay to the Count de Croiſſy, "*Vêni, male-*" "*dicâmus de rege ;*" i. e. "Come, now let us make free "with the character of the King." This account I had from the Ambaſſador himſelf.

Croissy continued in the town till the 13th of November, when having obtained from the enemy permiſſion to go away with his baggage, he took his leave of the King, whom he left amidſt the ruins of Stralſund,

Stralſund, with a garriſon diminiſhed by one half, and reſolved to ſtand an aſſault.

In ſhort, two days after, an aſſault was actually made upon the horn-work. The enemy twice took it, and twice were driven back. The King fought the whole time amidſt his grenadiers; but at laſt numbers prevailed, and the beſiegers remained maſters of the place. Charles continued in the town two days after this, expecting every moment a general aſſault. On the 21ſt he ſtaid till midnight upon a little ravelin, that was entirely demoliſhed by the bombs and cannon: the next day the principal Officers conjured him not to ſtay in a place, which it was no longer poſſible to defend; but his retreat was now become as dangerous as the place itſelf. The Baltic ſea was covered with Ruſſian and Daniſh ſhips, and there were no veſſels in the harbour of Stralſund but one ſmall bark with ſails and oars. So many dangers, which would render his retreat illuſtrious, determined Charles to attempt it. He embarked in the night, on the 20th of December 1715, accompanied by ten perſons only. They were obliged to break the ice, with which the water of the port was covered; a laborious taſk, which employed them ſeveral hours before the bark could ſail freely. The enemy's Admirals had poſitive orders not to ſuffer Charles to eſcape from Stralſund, but to take him dead or alive. Happily they were under the wind, and were not able to get to him; but he run a ſtill greater riſk in paſſing by

by a place called La Barbette, in the Iſle of Rugen, where the Danes had erected a battery of twelve cannon, from which they fired upon him. The Mariners ſpread every ſail, and plied every oar, to get clear of the enemy; but notwithſtanding, a cannon ball killed two men by the King's ſide, and another ſhattered the maſt of the bark. In the midſt of theſe dangers the King eſcaped unhurt, and at laſt came up with two of his own ſhips that were cruizing in the Baltic. The next day Stralſund ſurrendered, and the garriſon were made priſoners of war. Charles landed at Iſted in Scania, from which place he repaired to Carleſcroon, in a condition very different from what he was in, when about fifteen years before he ſet ſail from that harbour in a ſhip of a hundred and twenty guns, to give laws to the North.

Being ſo near his capital, it was expected that after ſuch a long abſence he would viſit that place; but his deſign was never to enter it again till he had obtained ſome ſignal victory. Beſides, he could not bear the thoughts of again ſeeing a people by whom he was beloved, and whom, nevertheleſs he was obliged to oppreſs, in order to enable him to defend himſelf againſt his enemies. He only wanted to ſee his ſiſter, with whom he appointed an interview on the banks of the lake Weter, in Oſtrogothia, whither he rode poſt, attended only by a ſingle domeſtic, and returned after having ſpent a day with her.

From

FROM Carleſcroon, where he ſojourned during the winter, he iſſued out orders for raiſing men throughout his whole kingdom. He thought that his ſubjects were born only to follow him to the field of battle, and had accuſtomed them to think ſo too. Young people were enliſted at the age of fifteen; and in ſeveral villages there were none left but old men, women, and children; and in many places women only were ſeen ploughing the land.

IT was ſtill more difficult to procure a fleet. To ſupply the want of this, commiſſions were granted to the owners of privateers, who, upon obtaining certain privileges unreaſonable in themſelves, and deſtructive to the country, equipped a few ſhips: theſe efforts were the laſt reſources of Sweden. To defray the expences of theſe preparations, he was obliged to take the ſubſtance of the people. Every kind of extortion was invented, under the name of taxes and duties. Strict ſearch was made in every houſe, and one half of the proviſions found in them was carried to the King's magazines: all the iron in the kingdom was bought up for his uſe, which Government paid for in paper, and ſold out again for ready money. A tax was laid on every one, who wore any mixture of ſilk in their clothes, or wore either perukes or gilt ſwords. A very heavy tax was alſo laid on chimnies. The people, oppreſſed with ſuch a load of taxes, would have revolted under any other King; but the pooreſt peaſant in Sweden knew that his maſter led a life

life ſtill more hard and frugal than himſelf; ſo that every one ſubmitted without murmuring to thoſe hardſhips, which the King was the firſt to ſuffer.

The public danger ſerved to make them forget their private misfortunes. They expected every moment to ſee their country invaded by the Ruſſians, the Danes, the Pruſſians, the Saxons, and even by the Engliſh; and this fear was ſo routed and ſo ſtrong, that thoſe, who had money or valuable effects, buried them in the earth.

In effect, an Engliſh fleet had already appeared in the Baltic, though its particular deſtination was not known; and the Czar had given his word to the King of Denmark, that the Ruſſians ſhould join the Danes, in the ſpring of 1716, in order to make a deſcent upon Sweden.

But it was an extreme ſurprize to all Europe, which was attentive to the fortunes of Charles XII. when, inſtead of defending his own country, which was threatened by ſo many Princes, he paſſed, in the month of March 1716, over into Norway, with twenty thouſand men.

No General had been known ſince Hannibal, who from inability to defend himſelf at home againſt his enemies, had undertaken to carry the war into the heart of their own dominions. The Prince of Heſſe, his

his brother-in-law, accompanied him in this expedition.

THERE is no travelling from Sweden to Norway but through the moſt dangerous defiles; and when theſe are paſſed, one is continually meeting with ſo many lakes of water formed by the ſea amongſt the rocks, that there is a neceſſity for making bridges every day. A ſmall number of Danes might have ſtopped the progreſs of the whole Swediſh army; but this ſudden invaſion they had not foreſeen. Europe was ſtill more aſtoniſhed that the Czar remained quiet in the midſt of all theſe mighty events, and that he did not make a deſcent upon Sweden, as had formerly been ſtipulated between him and his allies.

THIS inactivity was owing to one of the greateſt, and at the ſame time moſt difficult ſchemes that ever was formed by human imagination.

THE Baron Henry de Gortz, a native of Franconia, and a Baron *in capite* of the Empire, having rendered ſeveral important offices to the King of Sweden during that Monarch's ſtay at Bender, was now become his favourite and firſt Miniſter.

NEVER was there a man ſo bold, and at the ſame time ſo artful; ſo full of expedients amidſt misfortunes; ſo unbounded in his deſigns, or ſo active in

the proſecution of them: he was frightened by no project, he ſcrupled no means; he laviſhed gifts, promiſes, oaths, truth, and falſehood.

FROM Sweden he went to France, England, and Holland, to try thoſe ſecret ſprings, which he afterwards meant to put in motion. He was capable of diſturbing all Europe; and indeed had ſuch a plan in his mind. What his maſter was at the head of an army, he was in the cabinet; and in conſequence he had acquired an aſcendancy over Charles, which no Miniſter had poſſeſſed before him.

THAT King, who when only twenty years of age had preſcribed orders to Count Piper, now received inſtructions from Baron de Gortz; ſo much the more ſubmiſſive to the direction of that Miniſter, as his misfortunes obliged him to liſten to the advice of others, and as Gortz never gave him any but ſuch as was conformable to his courage. He remarked, that of all the Princes united againſt Sweden, George Elector of Hanover and King of England was the one againſt whom Charles was moſt highly incenſed, becauſe he was the only one that he had never offended; and becauſe George had entered into the quarrel under the pretext of accommodating it, but in reality to keep Bremen and Verden, to which he ſeemed to have no other right than that of having bought them for a trifle from the King of Denmark, to whom, after all, they did not belong.

HE

He alſo ſuſpected that the Czar was ſecretly diſſatisfied with his allies, who had all conſpired to hinder him from acquiring an eſtabliſhment in Germany, where that Monarch, already become too formidable, wanted only to obtain a footing. Wiſmar, the only town which ſtill remained to the Swedes on the frontiers of Germany, on the 14th of February, 1716, ſurrendered to the Danes and Pruſſians, who would not even ſuffer the Ruſſian troops that were then in Mecklenburgh to be preſent at the ſiege. Similar jealouſies, reiterated for two years together, had alienated the Czar's mind from the common cauſe, and perhaps prevented the ruin of Sweden. There are many inſtances of ſeveral States in alliance being conquered by a ſingle power, but ſcarcely any of a great Empire being totally ſubdued by ſeveral allies; for if their united forces happen, for a time, to humble it, their diviſions ſoon give it an opportunity to retrieve its former grandeur.

The Czar had had it in his power from the year 1714 to make a deſcent upon Sweden; but whether it was that he could not perfectly agree with the Kings of Poland, England, Denmark, and Pruſſia, allies juſtly jealous of his growing power, or that he did not think his troops as yet ſufficiently inured to war, to attack in their own territories a people, whoſe very peaſants had conquered the flower of the Daniſh forces, he ſtill put off the execution of this enterprize.

But

BUT what had chiefly ſtopped the progreſs of his deſigns was the want of money. The Czar was one of the moſt powerful Monarchs in the univerſe, but was far from being one of the richeſt, his revenues, at that time, not exceeding twenty-four millions of livres: he had indeed diſcovered ſome mines of gold, ſilver, copper, and iron; but the profits ariſing from theſe were ſtill uncertain, and the working of them was very extenſive. He had likewiſe eſtabliſhed an extenſive commerce; its beginnings, however, brought him in nothing but hopes. The provinces which he had lately conquered, increaſed his revenues without augmenting his power and glory. It required a long time to heal the wounds of Livonia; a country extremely fertile, but deſolated by fire, ſword, and diſtemper, and by a war of fifteen years continuance deſtitute of inhabitants, and as yet chargeable to the conqueror. The large fleets he maintained, and the new enterprizes which he was daily undertaking, contributed alſo to exhauſt his finances. He had even been reduced to the miſerable reſource of raiſing the value of money; a remedy that can never cure the evils of a State, and is particularly prejudicial to a country, which receives more commodities from ſtrangers, than it can ſupply them with.

THIS was a part of the foundation upon which Gortz had built his ſcheme of a revolution. He ventured to propoſe to the King of Sweden to purchaſe peace from the Ruſſian Emperor at any price whatſoever;

whatſoever; repreſenting to him, that the Czar was irritated againſt the Kings of Poland and England; and giving him to underſtand, that were the forces of Peter Alexiowitz and Charles XII. united, they would ſtrike terror throughout Europe.

THERE was no other way to accompliſh this peace with the Czar, than that of yielding up a great part of the provinces which lay to the Eaſt and North of the Baltic ſea; but then he would repreſent to the King, that in giving up theſe provinces, which the Czar had already poſſeſſed himſelf of, and which it was not in his power to retake, he might have the glory of at once replacing Staniſlaus on the throne of Poland, replacing the ſon of James II. on that of England, and of re-eſtabliſhing the Duke of Holſtein in his dominions.

CHARLES, elated with theſe great ideas, took no time to conſider of this ſcheme, but immediately gave his Miniſter a carte blanche. Gortz ſet out from Sweden, provided with a power which authorized him to do every thing without reſtriction, and conſtituted him Plenipotentiary to any Prince with whom he might judge it neceſſary to negociate. The firſt thing he did was to ſound the Court of Moſcow by means of a Scotchman named Erſkine, firſt Phyſician to the Czar; a man entirely devoted to the intereſt of the Pretender; as was indeed almoſt every Scotchman, who did not immediately

immediately ſubſiſt on the favours of the Court of London.

THE Phyſician repreſented to Prince Menzikoff the importance and glory of ſuch a project, with all the vivacity of a man, who was himſelf intereſted in the cauſe. Prince Menzikoff reliſhed the overtures, and the Czar approved them. Inſtead, therefore, of making a deſcent on Sweden, as he had agreed on with his allies, he wintered his troops in Mecklenburgh, and went thither himſelf, under pretence of ſettling ſome diſputes, which were then ariſing between the Duke of Mecklenburgh and the nobility of that country, but, in fact, to purſue his favourite deſign of obtaining a Principality in Germany, and confident of perſuading the Duke of Mecklenburgh to ſell him his Sovereignty.

THE allies were much irritated at this proceeding; they did not wiſh to have ſo formidable a neighbour, who, having once acquired poſſeſſions in Germany, might one day cauſe himſelf to be elected Emperor, and oppreſs its Sovereigns. The more they were enraged, the faſter did this great project of Baron de Gortz advance towards ſucceſs. He negociated, notwithſtanding, with every one of the confederate Princes, for the better carrying on his ſecret intrigues; and the Czar continued amuſing them all with various hopes. In the mean time Charles was in Norway, with his brother-in-law the Prince of Heſſe,

Heſſe, at the head of twenty thouſand men; this province was defended only by eleven thouſand men ſeparated in different bodies, whom the King and the Prince of Heſſe had put to the ſword.

CHARLES advanced as far as Chriſtiania, the capital of this kingdom; and in this corner of the globe Fortune again began to ſmile on him: but he never took ſufficient precautions to provide for the ſubſiſtence of his troops. A Daniſh fleet and army were approaching to the defence of Norway; and Charles, being in want of proviſions, was obliged to return to Sweden, there to wait the iſſue of his Miniſter's mighty projects.

THIS ſcheme required at once inviolable ſecrecy and immenſe preparations, two things almoſt incompatible. Gortz even cauſed an aſſiſtance to be ſought for in the ſeas of Aſia, which, however odious it ſeemed, was not on that account leſs uſeful towards the deſcent in Scotland, and which at any rate would have brought money, men, and veſſels into Sweden.

THE Pirates of every nation, and particularly thoſe of England, having entered into a mutual aſſociation, had long infeſted the ſeas of Europe and America; but having been purſued in every part without the leaſt quarter, they had lately retired to the coaſts of Madagaſcar, a large iſland in the eaſt of Africa.

Africa. Theſe men were all of them deſperadoes, and moſt of them famous for actions which wanted nothing but juſtice to render them truly heroic. They had for ſome time ſought a Prince who would receive them under his protection; but the laws of nations ſhut all the harbours in the world againſt them.

As ſoon as they were informed that Charles was returned to Sweden, they began to hope that that Prince, paſſionately fond of war, forced to carry it on, and in want of both ſhips and men, would grant them favourable terms: they accordingly ſent a deputy to Europe, on board of a Dutch veſſel, to make a propoſal to Baron de Gortz to receive them into the port of Gottenburgh, whither they offered to repair immediately with ſixty ſhips loaden with riches.

THE Baron prevailed upon the King to agree to this propoſition; and the year following two Swediſh gentlemen, one named Cromſtrom, and the other Mendal, were ſent to finiſh the negociation with the Corſairs of Madagaſcar. But a more honourable and a more powerful ſupport was ſoon after found in the Cardinal Alberoni, a man of an extraordinary genius, who governed Spain long enough for his own glory, but too ſhort a time for the grandeur of that kingdom.

HE

He entered with ardour into the project of placing the ſon of James II. on the throne of England. Nevertheleſs, as he was juſt entered into the Miniſtry, and had the affairs of Spain to eſtabliſh before he could think of throwing other kingdoms into confuſion, it was not likely that he would be able for many years to ſet his hand to this great work; yet, notwithſtanding, in leſs than two years he changed the face of affairs in Spain; recovered to that kingdom its credit in Europe; engaged, as is generally imagined, the Turks to attack the Emperor of Germany; and attempted, at the ſame time, to take away the Regency of France from the Duke of Orleans, and the crown of Great Britain from King George. So dangerous is even one man when he is abſolute in a powerful State, and poſſeſſed of courage and greatneſs of ſoul.

Gortz having thus diſperſed through the Courts of Muſcovy and Spain the firſt ſparks of that flame, which he meant to kindle, went ſecretly to France, and from thence to Holland, where he negociated with many of the Pretender's adherents.

He informed himſelf more particularly of the force, number, and diſpoſition of the malecontents in England, and alſo of the money they could furniſh, and the troops they could raiſe. The malecontents aſked only the aſſiſtance of ten thouſand men, and

repreſented the revolution as infallible with the aſſiſtance of theſe troops.

COUNT DE GILLEMBOURG, the Swediſh Ambaſſador in England, being inſtructed by Baron Gortz, had ſeveral conferences at London with the principal malecontents; he encouraged them, and promiſed them every thing they could wiſh for: the Pretender's party went ſo far as to furniſh ſeveral conſiderable ſums of money, which Gortz received in Holland. He negociated alſo about the purchaſe of ſome ſhips, and bought ſix in Brittany, with all kinds of arms.

HE then ſent ſeveral Officers privately into France, and among others the Chevalier de Folard, who, having made thirty campaigns in the French armies without any conſiderable addition to his fortune, had lately offered his ſervices to the King of Sweden, not ſo much from any intereſted views, as from a deſire to ſerve under a King, who had ſo aſtoniſhing a reputation. The Chevalier de Folard hoped alſo to prevail on that Prince to adopt his new ideas on the art of war, he having ſtudied that art all his life as a philoſopher; and he has ſince given to the world his diſcoveries in his Commentary on Polybius. His ideas were approved of by Charles, who had made war himſelf in a manner entirely new, and was never guided by cuſtom in any thing: he deſtined the Chevalier de Folard for one of the inſtruments he was to make

make uſe of in his projected deſcent upon Scotland. That gentleman executed the ſecret orders of Baron de Gortz in France. A great number of French, and ſtill a greater number of Iriſh Officers engaged in this conſpiracy of a new kind, which was hatching at the ſame time in England, France, and Muſcovy, and the branches of which were ſecretly extended from one end of Europe to the other.

These preparations were nothing to what Gortz intended to do; but it was a great thing to have begun. The moſt important point, and without which nothing could ſucceed, was to complete the peace between the Czar and Charles. There remained many difficulties to be removed. Baron Oſterman, Miniſter of State in Muſcovy, refuſed at firſt to come into de Gortz's meaſures; he being as circumſpect as the Miniſter of Charles was enterprizing. The one, ſlow and regular in his politics, was for ſuffering every thing to ripen; while the other, of an impatient ſpirit, was for reaping the harveſt as ſoon as the ſeed was ſown. Oſterman was afraid that the Emperor his maſter, dazzled with the ſplendour of this enterprize, would grant the Swedes a too advantageous peace; he therefore delayed the concluſion of it, by his obſtacles and procraſtinations.

Happily for Baron de Gortz, the Czar himſelf arrived in Holland at the beginning of the year 1717. His deſign was to go from thence into France:

he had not yet ſeen that celebrated nation, which for more than an hundred years has been cenſured, envied, and imitated by all its neighbours: he wanted to gratify there his inſatiable curioſity of ſeeing and learning every thing, and at the ſame time to exerciſe his politics.

GORTZ had two conferences with the Emperor at the Hague; in which he made greater progreſs than he could have done in ſix months with the Plenipotentiaries. Every thing wore a favourable aſpect; his mighty projects ſeemed covered by an impenetrable ſecrecy; and he flattered himſelf that Europe would only know them by their being carried into execution. In the mean time he talked of nothing but of peace at the Hague, and openly declared, that he would always conſider the King of England as the pacifier of the North; and he even preſſed, in appearance, the holding of a congreſs at Brunſwick, wherein the intereſts of Sweden and its enemies might be amicably decided.

THE firſt who diſcovered theſe intrigues was the Duke of Orleans, Regent of France, who had ſpies in every part of Europe. Men of this deſcription, whoſe profeſſion it is to ſell the ſecrets of their friends, who ſubſiſt by informations, and frequently even by calumnies, were ſo much increaſed in France under his government, that one half of the nation were become ſpies on the other. The Duke of Orleans,

Orleans, connected with the King of England by perſonal engagements, diſcovered to him the plot that was hatching againſt him.

At the ſame time the Dutch, who took umbrage at the behaviour of de Gortz, communicated their ſuſpicions to the Engliſh Miniſter. Gortz and Gillembourg were proſecuting their ſchemes with great vigour, when they were both arreſted, the one at Deventer in Guelder, and the other at London.

Gillembourg, the Swediſh Ambaſſador, had violated the law of nations, by conſpiring againſt the Prince to whom he was delegated, and no ſcruple was entertained of violating the ſame law by arreſting his perſon. But all the world was aſtoniſhed to ſee the States-General, through an unheard-of complaiſance towards the King of England, impriſon Baron de Gortz. They even appointed the Count de Welderen to examine him. This formality was only an aggravation of their inſult, which being rendered uſeleſs, turned out to their own confuſion. Gortz aſked the Count de Welderen if he knew him? "Yes, Sir," replied the Dutchman. "Well, then," replied de Gortz "if you do know me, you know alſo that I anſwer to "nothing but what I pleaſe." The examination was ſcarcely puſhed any farther. All the Ambaſſadors, but particularly the Marquis de Monteleon, the Spaniſh Ambaſſador, proteſted againſt the outrage offered to the

the perſons of Gortz and Gillembourg. The Dutch were without excuſe. They had not only violated a moſt ſacred law by ſeizing the Prime Miniſter of the King of Sweden, who had formed no plots againſt them, but they acted directly againſt the principles of that liberty which had drawn ſo many foreigners into their country, and which had been the foundation of all their greatneſs.

WITH regard to the King of England, he had committed no breach of juſtice in impriſoning his enemy. He publiſhed in his own vindication the letters of Baron de Gortz and Count Gillembourg, which were found among the papers of the latter. The King of Sweden was in Scania at the time when he received theſe printed letters, together with the news of his two Miniſters being impriſoned. He aſked with a ſmile, "if they had printed his letters alſo?" He immediately gave orders for arreſting the Engliſh Reſident at Stockholm, with all his family and domeſtics. He forbade the Dutch Reſident the Court, and took care to have him ſtrictly watched. Meanwhile he neither avowed nor diſavowed the proceedings of de Gortz; being too proud to deny a ſcheme, which he had once approved, and too wiſe to acknowledge a plot, which had been ſtifled almoſt in its birth; he therefore maintained a diſdainful ſilence towards England and Holland.

THE

THE Czar took a different courſe. As he was not named, but only obſcurely hinted at in the papers of Gortz and Gillembourg, he wrote a long letter to the King of England, full of compliments on the diſcovery of the conſpiracy, and aſſurance of a ſincere friendſhip: King George received his proteſtations without believing them, and pretended to be deceived by them. A conſpiracy formed by private men, is annihilated the moment it is diſcovered; but a conſpiracy formed by Kings, only gains ſtrength by its being known. The Czar arrived at Paris in the month of May in the ſame year. He did not totally employ himſelf in viewing the beauties of art and nature, in viſiting the academies, the public libraries, the cabinets of the curious, and the royal palaces; he propoſed a treaty to the Duke of Orleans, Regent of France, the acceptation of which would have completed the grandeur of Muſcovy. His deſign was to unite himſelf with the King of Sweden, who would yield to him ſeveral large provinces; to entirely deprive the Danes of the empire of the Baltic ſea; to weaken the Engliſh by a civil war, and to draw all the trade of the North to Ruſſia. He had even ſome thoughts of ſetting up Staniſlaus afreſh againſt Auguſtus, ſo that the fire being kindled on every ſide, he might have it in his power either to quench or blow it up, as he ſhould find beſt conducive to his intereſt. With this view he propoſed to the Regent of France to act as a mediator between Sweden and Muſcovy, and to make a league offenſive and

defenſive

defenſive with thoſe two crowns and that of Spain. This treaty, which appeared ſo natural and ſo advantageous to the ſeveral nations concerned, and which placed the balance of power in Europe in their hands, was not accepted by the Duke of Orleans. He at that very time entered into engagements of a quite contrary nature; he made a league with the Emperor of Germany, and with George King of England. Reaſons of ſtate had now ſo altered the views of all the Princes of Europe, that the Czar was ready to declare againſt his old ally Auguſtus, and to eſpouſe the cauſe of Charles, his mortal enemy; while France, to oblige the Germans and the Engliſh, was going to make war upon the grandſon of Louis XIV. after having ſo long ſupported him againſt theſe very enemies, at the expence of ſo much blood and treaſures. All that the Czar obtained by indirect meaſures, was the prevailing upon the Regent to interpoſe his good offices to procure the enlargement of Gortz and Gillembourg. He returned to his own dominions about the end of June, after having ſhewn the French the uncommon ſight of an Emperor travelling for inſtruction; but the generality of that people only took notice of his rude unpoliſhed manners, the reſult of his bad education; while the legiſlator, the hero, and the creator of a new nation, entirely eſcaped their obſervation.

WHAT the Czar ſought for in the Duke of Orleans, he ſoon found in Cardinal Alberoni, now become all-

all-powerful in Spain. Alberoni wiſhed for nothing ſo much as the reſtoration of the Pretender; not only as Miniſter of Spain, which had been ſo ill-treated by the Engliſh, but as a perſonal enemy to the Duke of Orleans, who was leagued with England againſt Spain; and laſtly, as a Prieſt of that Church, for the ſake of which the Pretender's father had ſo imprudently loſt his crown.

THE Duke of Ormond, as much beloved in England as the Duke of Marlborough was admired, had left his country at the acceſſion of King George, and was at that time retired to Madrid. He went from thence, inveſted with full powers by the King of Spain and the Pretender, together with one Jerningham, another native of England, a man of fine addreſs and an enterprizing ſpirit, to meet the Czar in his way to Mittau in Courland. He demanded the Princeſs Anna Petrowna, the Czar's daughter, in marriage for the ſon of James II.* hoping that this alliance would more ſtrongly attach the Czar to the intereſts of that unhappy Prince. But this propoſal, inſtead of forwarding

* *The Cardinal Alberoni confirms the truth of all theſe particulars in a letter of thanks to the author. M. Norberg, whoſe ignorance of the affairs of Europe can only be equalled by the poverty of his genius, alledges that the Duke of Ormond did not quit England upon the acceſſion of George I. but immediately after the death of Queen Anne; as if George I. had not been the immediate ſucceſſor of that Queen.*

ing, had nearly retarded for a time the progreſs of the negociations. Baron de Gortz, among his other projects, had long deſtined this Princeſs for the Duke of Holſtein, to whom, in effect, ſhe was ſoon after married. As ſoon as he was informed of the Duke of Ormond's propoſal, he became jealous of its ſucceſs, and applied every art to ſet it aſide. He, as well as Count Gillembourg, was ſet at liberty in the month of Auguſt; the King of Sweden not even deigning to make the leaſt excuſe to the King of England, nor to ſhew the ſlighteſt diſapprobation of his Miniſter's conduct.

AT the ſame time the Engliſh Reſident and all his family were releaſed at Stockholm, where they had been treated with much more ſeverity than Gillembourg had been at London.

GORTZ having obtained his freedom, behaved like an implacable enemy, having the ſpirit of revenge joined to the powerful motives by which he had been formerly actuated. He went poſt to the Czar, and by his artful inſinuations obtained a greater aſcendancy over that Prince than ever. He aſſured him directly, that in leſs than three months he would, in conjunction with a ſingle Plenipotentiary from Ruſſia, remove every obſtacle that retarded the concluſion of a peace with Sweden; and taking a map in his hand, which had been drawn by the Czar himſelf, he drew a line from Wibourg all the way to the Frozen Sea, running along the Lake Ladoga, and

and undertook to perſuade his maſter to give up all the country lying to the eaſtward of that line, as well as Carelia, Ingria, and Livonia: after that he threw out propoſitions for a marriage between his Czariſh Majeſty's daughter and the Duke of Holſtein, flattering the Czar that the Duke might be prevailed upon to yield up his dominions for an equivalent, by which means he would become a member of the Empire, ſhewing him afar off the Imperial Crown, whether it were to be worn by himſelf or by one of his deſcendants. He thus flattered the ambitious views of the Ruſſian Monarch, and prevented the Pretender from marrying the Czarian Princeſs, while he opened to him the road into England, and accompliſhed all his own projects at once.

THE Czar named the Iſle of Alan for holding conferences between Oſterman his Miniſter of State and Baron de Gortz. The Duke of Ormond was deſired to return to Spain, that the Czar might not give too great cauſe of offence to the Engliſh, to whom he had no intention of giving umbrage till he ſhould be ready to make the projected invaſion: Jerningham, the Duke's confident, who was properly inſtructed, was allowed to ſtay at Peterſburgh, where he lived with ſo much precaution, that he never went abroad but in the night-time, nor ever converſed with any of the Czar's Miniſters, except in the diſguiſe of a peaſant or Tartar.

As

As ſoon as the Duke of Ormond departed, the Czar acquainted the King of England with the high compliment he had paid him in diſmiſſing the greateſt man in the Pretender's faction; and Baron de Gortz, full of hope, returned to Sweden.

He found his maſter at the head of thirty-five thouſand regular troops, and all the coaſts lined with the militia. The King wanted nothing but money; credit, as well at home as abroad, being entirely exhauſted. France, which had furniſhed him with ſome ſupplies during the laſt years of Louis XIV. refuſed to contribute any more under the Regency of the Duke of Orleans, who was governed by quite contrary maxims. Spain promiſed him ſome remittances; but was not as yet able to furniſh much. De Gortz at this time put into execution in its full extent, a ſcheme, which he formerly tried before his journey to France and Holland: this was, to give to copper the value of ſilver; ſo that a piece of copper the intrinſic value of which was only a halfpenny, ſhould, when ſtamped with the King's mark, paſs for forty pence; in the ſame manner as the Governors of beſieged towns frequently pay the ſoldiers and citizens in leather money, in hopes of being one day able to reimburſe them in real coin. This fictitious kind of money, invented by neceſſity, and to which nothing can give a durable credit but the good faith of a Government, reſembles bills

of

of exchange, the imaginary value of which may eaſily exceed the real funds of a State.

THESE reſources are of great uſe in a free country: they have ſometimes ſaved a Republic, but almoſt certainly ruin a Monarchy; for the people ſoon tiring of confidence, the Miniſter is reduced to break his faith; this ideal coin is multiplied to exceſs, and individuals bury the ſpecie they poſſeſs; and the whole machine is deſtroyed with a confuſion, which is often accompanied by the greateſt diſaſters. This was what happened to the Kingdom of Sweden.

BARON DE GORTZ at firſt iſſued out his new coin with diſcretion; but, by the rapidity of the movement, which he could no longer govern, he was in a little time hurried beyond the limits which he had originally preſcribed. All kinds of merchandize and proviſions having riſen to an immoderate price, he was obliged to increaſe the quantity of the copper coin. But the more it was increaſed, the leſs was its value: at laſt, Sweden, overrun by this falſe money, ſet up a general cry againſt de Gortz. The people, who had always beheld their Sovereign with veneration, could not find in their hearts to hate him, and therefore made the weight of their reſentment fall on a Miniſter, who, as he was a foreigner and chief director of the finances, was doubly certain of the public hatred.

A TAX, which he wanted to lay on the Clergy, rendered him totally deteſtable to the nation: the Prieſts, who too often join their own cauſe to that of Heaven, publicly pronounced him an atheiſt, becauſe he demanded their money. Some of the new coin being ſtamped with the figures of the Heathen Gods, they took this occaſion to call thoſe pieces *les Dieux du Baron de Gurtz*, the Gods of Baron de Gortz.

To this public hatred were joined the jealouſies of the Miniſters; the more implacable, as they were at that time without power to affect him. The King's ſiſter and the Prince her husband feared him as a man attached by his birth to the Duke of Holſtein, and who might one day be able to place the crown of Sweden on his head. He had gained no one's affections in the kingdom but Charles's; yet this general averſion ſerved only to confirm the friendſhip of the King, whoſe opinions were always ſtrengthened by contradictions. He now placed a confidence in the Baron bordering on ſubmiſſion: he gave him an abſolute power in the interior government of the kingdom; and committed to his care, without the leaſt reſerve, whatever related to the negociations with the Czar, recommending to him above all things, to haſten the conferences that were to be held in the Iſle of Alan.

In

In effect, Gortz had no ſooner finiſhed the arrangement of the finances at Stockholm, which demanded his preſence, than he ſet out to conclude with the Czar's Miniſter the grand ſcheme he had projected.

The following are the preliminary conditions of that alliance, which was wholly to have changed the face of affairs in Europe; they were found among de Gortz's papers after his death.

The Czar was to keep the whole of Livonia, and part of Ingria and Carelia, and to reſtore the reſt to Sweden: he was to join Charles XII. in the deſign to re-eſtabliſh Staniſlaus on the throne of Poland, and was to engage to enter that country with eighty thouſand Ruſſians to dethrone Auguſtus, the very King in whoſe defence he had waged a war of ten years continuance. He was alſo to furniſh the King of Sweden with a ſufficient number of ſhips to tranſport ten thouſand Swedes to England, and thirty thouſand to Germany. The united forces of Peter and Charles were to attack the King of England in his States of Hanover, and particularly in Bremen and Verden: the ſame troops would have ſerved to reſtore the Duke of Holſtein, and compelled the King of Pruſſia to accept a treaty, by which he would have been deprived of part of thoſe territories which he had formerly taken.

FROM this time Charles aſſumed as lofty airs as if his victorious troops, reinforced by thoſe of the Czar, had already executed every thing they intended. He haughtily demanded of the Emperor of Germany to conclude the treaty of Altranſtad. The Court of Vienna ſcarcely deigned to give an anſwer to the propoſal of a Prince from whom they thought they had nothing to fear.

THE King of Poland did not poſſeſs ſo much confidence: he ſaw the clouds gathering on every ſide. The Poliſh Nobility had formed a confederacy againſt him: and ſince his reſtoration he had continually been engaged either in wars or treaties with his ſubjects. The Czar, a dangerous mediator, had an hundred gallies near Dantzick, and forty thouſand men on the frontiers of Poland. All the North was filled with jealouſy and apprehenſion. Fleming, the moſt diſtruſtful of men, and himſelf the moſt to be diſtruſted by the neighbouring Powers, was the firſt who ſuſpected the deſigns of the Czar and the King of Sweden in favour of Staniſlaus. He determined therefore to have him ſeized in the Dutchy of Deux-Ponts, as James Sobieſky had formerly been in Sileſia. A Frenchman, one of thoſe reſtleſs and enterprizing ſpirits, who wander into foreign parts to try their fortunes, had lately brought a ſmall number of his countrymen, bold and daring like himſelf, into the ſervice of the King of Poland. He communicated a project to Fleming, by which he engaged, with thirty

French

French Officers, to ſeize Staniſlaus in his own palace, and carry him a priſoner to Dreſden. The project was approved. Such enterprizes were then very common. Some of thoſe fellows, who are called bravoes in Italy, had performed ſimilar acts in the Milaneſe during the laſt war between France and Germany. After that time ſeveral French refugees in Holland had ventured to penetrate as far as Verſailles, in order to carry off the Dauphin; and had actually ſeized the perſon of the firſt Equerry, almoſt under the windows of the caſtle where Louis XIV. reſided.

SAISSAN prepared his men and relays of poſt-horſes in order to ſeize and carry off Staniſlaus. The enterprize was diſcovered the night before it was to have been carried into execution. Several of them made their eſcape, and the reſt were taken priſoners. They had no right to expect to be treated as priſoners of war, but rather as banditti. Staniſlaus, however, inſtead of puniſhing them, contented himſelf with reproaching them with their baſeneſs, and ever that he did in terms replete with humanity; he even gave them money to conduct them back to Poland, and by this generous behaviour plainly ſhewed that his rival Auguſtus had but too much reaſon to fear him.*

* *Here M. Norberg accuſes the author of want of reſpect to crowned heads; as if this faithful account contained in it any thing injurious, or as if we were obliged to relate ought but truth of departed Kings.*

In the mean time Charles departed a ſecond time for the conqueſt of Norway, in the month of October 1718. He had ſo well taken all his meaſures, that he hoped in ſix months time to make himſelf maſter of that kingdom. He rather choſe to go and conquer rocks amidſt ice and ſnow, in the depth of winter, which kills the animals even in Sweden, where the air is leſs cold, than to retake his beautiful Provinces in Germany from the hands of his enemies. Theſe he expected he ſhould ſoon be able to recover, in conſequence of his alliance with the Czar; and his vanity, beſides, was more flattered at raviſhing a kingdom from his victorious enemy.

At the mouth of the river Tiſtendall, near the Channel of Denmark, and between the towns of Bahus and Anſlo, ſtands Frederickſhall, a place of great ſtrength and importance, and conſidered as the key of the kingdom. Charles formed the ſiege of this place in the month of December. The ſoldiers, benumbed with cold, could ſcarcely turn up the earth, which was ſo much hardened by the froſt, that it was almoſt as difficult to pierce it as if they had been opening trenches in a rock; yet the Swedes could not be diſheartened, while they ſaw their King at their head, who partook of all their fatigues. Charles had never before undergone ſo many hardſhips. His conſtitution, hardened by eighteen years of ſevere labours, was fortified to ſuch a degree, that he ſlept in the open field in Norway in the midſt of winter, either on a truſs

truſs of ſtraw or a plank, covered only with a cloak, without the leaſt prejudice to his health.

SEVERAL of the ſoldiers dropped down dead at their poſts, and the reſt were almoſt frozen to death; yet as they ſaw their King ſuffering like themſelves, they did not dare to make the leaſt complaint. Having heard, ſome time before this expedition, of a certain woman in Scania, called Joan Dotter, who had lived for ſeveral months without taking any other nouriſhment than water; he, who had ſtudied all his life to ſupport the moſt extreme rigours that human nature could bear, reſolved to try how long he could faſt without being worn out. He paſſed five whole days without either eating or drinking; and on the morning of the ſixth rode two leagues, and then alighted at the tent of the Prince of Heſſe, his brother-in-law, where he eat heartily, without feeling the leaſt inconvenience from this abſtinence of five days, or from the plentiful meal, which immediately ſucceeded.*

WITH this body of iron, governed by a ſoul ſo enterprizing and inflexible in every ſituation he was reduced to, he could not fail to be formidable to all his neighbours.

ON*

* *Norberg pretends that it was to cure a pain in his breaſt that Charles tried this ſtrange abſtinence. Confeſſor Norberg is ſurely a bad phyſician.*

On the 11th of December, being St. Andrew's day, he went at nine in the evening to viſit the trenches; and not finding the parallel ſo far advanced as he expected, appeared very much diſpleaſed. Mr. Megret, a French Engineer, who conducted the ſiege, aſſured him that the place could be taken in eight days. "We ſhall ſee," ſaid the King, and went on with the Engineer to ſurvey the works. He ſtopped at a place where a branch of the trenches formed an angle with the parallel; and kneeling on the inner talus, and reſting his elbows on the parapet, continued in that poſture for ſome time, to view the men, who were carrying on the trenches by ſtarlight.

The leaſt circumſtances become important when they relate to the death of ſuch a man as Charles XII. I muſt therefore ſay, that the whole of the converſation reported by ſo many writers to have paſſed between the King and Megret the Engineer is abſolutely falſe. This is what I know to be the real truth of the matter.

Almost half of the King's body was expoſed to a battery of cannon, pointed directly againſt the angle where he was: there was no one near his perſon at this time but two Frenchmen; one of whom was M. Siquier, his Aid-de-camp, a man of courage and conduct, who had entered into his ſervice in Turkey, and who was particularly attached to the Prince

Prince of Heſſe; and the other was this Engineer. The cannon fired upon them, but the King, being the leaſt covered by the parapet, was the moſt expoſed. At ſome diſtance behind them was Count Swerin, who commanded in the trenches. Count Poſſe, a Captain of the Guards, and an Aid-de-camp named Kulbert, were receiving orders from him. Siquier and Megret ſaw the King the moment he fell, which he did upon the parapet, with a deep ſigh. They immediately ran to him: he was already dead. A ball of half a pound weight had ſtruck him on the right temple, and made a hole ſufficient to receive three fingers at once: his head was reclined on the parapet, his left eye beat in, and the right one entirely out of its ſocket. The inſtant of his wound had been that of his death; but he had had the force, while expiring in ſo ſudden a manner, to place, by a natural movement, his hand upon the hilt of his ſword, and he remained in that attitude. At the ſight of this ſpectacle, Megret, a man of a peculiar and callous diſpoſition, ſaid nothing but theſe words, "There! the play is over, let us be gone." Siquier ran immediately to inform Count Swerin. They all agreed to conceal the news of his death from the ſoldiers till they could acquaint the Prince of Heſſe with it. They wrapt up the body in a grey cloak. Siquier put his hat and wig on the King's head; and in this condition they carried Charles, under the name of one Captain Carliſberg, through the midſt of his

his troops, who ſaw their dead King paſs them, without ever dreaming that it was he.

THE Prince inſtantly gave orders that no one ſhould go out of the camp, and that all the paſſes to Sweden ſhould be ſtrictly guarded, that he might have time to take neceſſary meaſures for placing the crown on his wife's head, and excluding the Duke of Holſtein, who might lay claim to it.

THUS fell Charles XII. King of Sweden, at the age of thirty-ſix years and a half, after having experienced whatever is moſt brilliant in proſperity, and all that is moſt poignant in adverſity, without having been enervated by the one, or having wavered, though but for a moment, with the other. Almoſt all his actions, even thoſe of his private life, bordered on the marvellous. He is perhaps the only one of all mankind, and hitherto the only one among Kings, who has lived without a ſingle frailty. He carried all the virtues of heroes to an exceſs at which they are as dangerous as their oppoſite vices. His reſolution, hardened into obſtinacy, occaſioned his misfortunes in the Ukraine, and detained him five years in Turkey; his liberality, degenerating into profuſion, ruined Sweden; his courage, extending even to raſhneſs, was the cauſe of his death; his juſtice has ſometimes extended to cruelty; and during the laſt years of his reign the means he employed to ſupport his authority differed little

little from tyranny. His great qualities, any one of which would have been ſufficient to have immortaliz-ed another Prince, proved the misfortune of his coun-try. He never was the aggreſſor; yet in taking ven-geance he was more implacable than prudent. He was the firſt man, who ever aſpired to the title of Conquer-or, without the leaſt deſire of enlarging his own domin-ions; and whoſe only end in ſubduing kingdoms, was to have the pleaſure of giving them away. His paſſion for glory, for war, and revenge, prevented him from being a good politician; a quality without which the world had never before ſeen any one a con-queror. Before a battle, and after a victory, he was modeſt and humble; and after a defeat, firm and undaunted; inflexible towards others as well as to-wards himſelf, rating at nothing the fatigues and lives of his ſubjects any more than his own; rather an extraordinary than a great man, and more worthy to be admired than imitated. His life ought to be a leſſon to Kings, how much a pacific and happy govern-ment is preferable to ſo much glory.

CHARLES XII. was of a tall ſtature, with a noble air; he had a fine forehead, large blue eyes full of ſweetneſs, and a handſome noſe; but the lower part of his face was diſagreeable, and too often diſfigured by a frequent laugh, at which time he ſcarce opened his lips, and he had ſcarce any beard or hair. He ſpoke very little, and frequently only anſwered people with that laugh, which was habitual to him. With the inflex-ible obſtinacy of his temper, he always retained that

timidity

timidity, which goes by the name of falſe modeſty. He would have been embarraſſed in a converſation, becauſe, having given up his time entirely to war and action, he had no knowledge of ſociety. Till the time of his reſidence among the Turks, which furniſhed him with a good deal of leiſure, he had read nothing but Cæſar's Commentaries and the Hiſtory of Alexander; yet he had written ſome reflections on the art of war, and particularly on his own campaigns from 1700 to 1709. This he owned to the Chevalier de Folard, but ſaid that the manuſcript had been loſt in the unfortunate battle of Pultowa. Some people would deſcribe Charles as a good mathematician: he poſſeſſed, no doubt, a great degree of penetration, but the arguments they make uſe of to prove his knowledge in mathematics, are by no means concluſive: he wanted to alter the method of counting by tens, and propoſed to ſubſtitute in its place the number 64, becauſe that number contains both a cube and a ſquare, and being divided by two is reducible to a unit. This only proves that he delighted in every thing extraordinary and difficult.

With regard to his religion, though the ſentiments of a Prince ought to have no influence on other men, and though the opinion of a Monarch ſo illiterate as Charles, can be of little conſequence in theſe matters, yet it is neceſſary to gratify in this as well as in every other particular, the curioſity of mankind, who are anxious to know whatever relates to this Prince.

Prince. I am informed by the gentleman who furniſhed me with the greateſt part of the materials which compoſe this Hiſtory, that Charles was a ſerious Lutheran till the year 1707. He then happened to ſee at Leipſick the famous philoſopher Mr. Leibnitz, who thought and ſpoke freely, and had already inſtilled his ſentiments into more Princes than one. I cannot believe, as it is reported, that Charles conceived an indifference for Lutheraniſm from the converſation of this philoſopher, who never had the honour to talk with him above a quarter of an hour; but M. Fabricius, who lived with him in great familiarity for ſeven years ſucceſſively, told me, that Charles having ſeen, during his reſidence among the Turks, ſuch an infinite variety of religions, his indifference became greater. La Mottraye in his Voyages confirms this idea. The ſame too is the opinion of the Count de Croiſſy, who hath ſeveral times told me, that of all his old principles, Charles retained none but that of abſolute predeſtination; a doctrine that favoured his courage and juſtified his temerity. The Czar held the ſame opinion with regard to fate and religion; but talked of theſe ſubjects more frequently, as indeed he did of every thing elſe with his favourites, with much familiarity; for he had the advantage over Charles, both in the ſtudy of philoſophy and the gift of eloquence.

HERE I cannot help taking notice of a calumny that is too often raiſed at the death of Princes by the malicious, and too readily believed by the credulous, that their death is always owing to poiſon or aſſaſſination. A report had ſpread through Germany, that M. Siquier himſelf had killed the King of Sweden. That brave Officer was long grieved at this injurious aſperſion; and one day talking to me on the ſubject, uſed the following expreſſion: "I might have killed "the King of Sweden, but ſuch was my reſpect for "that hero, that had I conceived the thought, I "could not have had the courage to carry it into "execution."

I KNOW very well that Siquier himſelf gave occaſion for this heavy accuſation, which, even to this day, is believed by a part of Sweden: he told me, that during a raging fever at Stockholm, he had cried out that he had killed the King of Sweden; and that in the height of his phrenzy he even opened the window, and publicly begged pardon for the regicide. When he was acquainted, in the courſe of his recovery, with what he had ſaid in his illneſs, he was ready to die with grief. This anecdote I did not chuſe to reveal during his life-time. I ſaw him a little time before his death, and I think I can ſafely affirm, that, ſo far from killing Charles XII. he would have ſuffered a thouſand deaths could he have ſaved his life. Had he been guilty of ſuch a crime,

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it muſt have been to have ſerved ſome Prince, who, no doubt, would have liberally rewarded him; but he died in France extremely poor, and even ſtood in need of aſſiſtance from myſelf. If theſe reaſons are not ſufficient, let it be conſidered, that the ball, by which Charles fell, could not enter into a piſtol, and that Siquier could not have executed this deteſtable crime, but with a piſtol concealed under his clothes.

AFTER the death of the King, the ſiege of Frederickſhall was raiſed; every thing was changed in the Government. The Swedes, more oppreſſed than flattered by the glory of their Prince, loſt no time in concluding a peace with their enemies, and ſuppreſſing that abſolute power, which Baron de Gortz had made them feel to exceſs. The States freely elected the ſiſter of Charles XII. for their Queen, and obliged her, by a ſolemn act, to renounce all hereditary right to the crown, in order that ſhe ſhould only hold it by the ſuffrages of the nation. She promiſed with reiterated oaths that ſhe would never attempt to reſtore arbitrary authority, and at laſt ſacrificed the love of royalty to conjugal affection, yielded the crown to her huſband, and engaged the States to elect that Prince, who mounted the throne on the ſame conditions as herſelf.

THE

THE Baron de Gortz, being ſeized inſtantly after the death of Charles, was condemned by the Senate of Stockholm to have his head cut off at the foot of the gallows of the town; an example of revenge, perhaps, rather than of juſtice; and a cruel inſult to the memory of a King, whom Sweden ſtill admires.

FINIS.



From the Preſs of S. Wilkinson, Morpeth.

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